



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





AMOURS OF GREAT MEN.

.





AMOURS OF GREAT MEN.

BY

ALBERT D. VANDAM,

AUTHOR OF "AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE."

"Let the high Muse chant loves Olympian,
We are but mortals, and must sing of man."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 8, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

1878.

[Right of Translation reserved.]

210. n. 51.



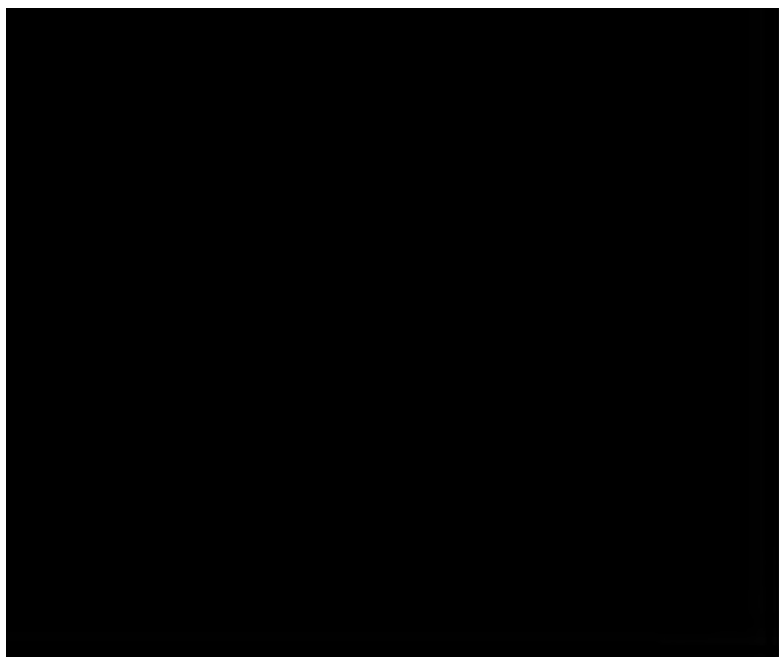
Gallanigne Press

BALLANTYNE AND HANSON, EDINBURGH





TO HIS FRIEND AND PHYSICIAN
DR. JULIUS LICHTENBERG,
THIS BOOK
Is Dedicated
BY THE AUTHOR,
AS A TRIBUTE OF ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE.





CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

	PAGE
THE PREFACE	
A MISGUIDED PARENT	ix
LOVE'S IMPENITENCE	
THE STORY OF HÉLOISE AND ABAILARD	
RETOLD	1
AN UNREQUITED LOVE	
PETRARCH AND LAURA	45
THE LOVE THAT LIVETH	
DANTE AND BEATRICE	89
HANS MEMLING'S LOVE	147
LOVED BENEATH HIM	
RAPHAEL	261
THE MEDAL REVERSED	
CLÉMENT MAROT	311





THE PREFACE.

A MISGUIDED PARENT.

“Tout est nu sur la terre, hormis l'hypocrisie.”

ALFRED DE MUSSET, *Namouna*.

THE preface to a book is like the entrance-hall to a house; the first is scarcely ever read; the second little noticed in the visitor's transit to the inner apartments. Yet we may gather from the one the taste of the owner of the dwelling, from the other the intention of the author.

The nature of my subject, in its present treatment, requiring a deal of metaphor and *façon de parler*, I have elected to substitute a story for the ordinary prefatorial remarks, as a hint of the course I mean to pursue.

There was once a milliner who had an *unnatural* child; I say *unnatural* advisedly, in vindication of the spotless honour of the mother, of the unsullied pedigree of the babe which was born in holy wedlock.

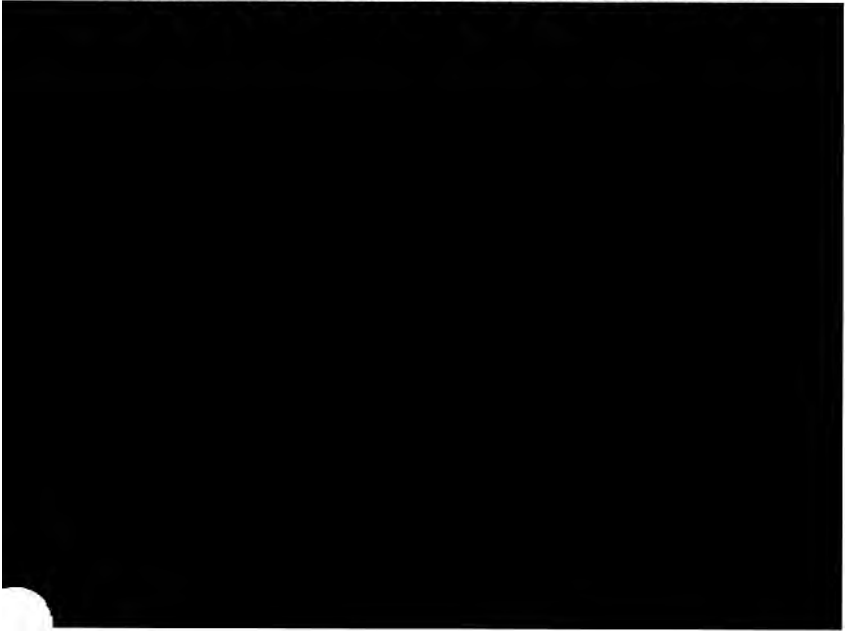
The mother doated on her offspring, loved to dress it as handsomely as she could—a ribbon here, a frill there, now of sober, then of more showy hue and pattern. The adornment of the child seemed to be the mother's only joy.

Though many people objected to the glaring colours, the extravagant shape and costly material of the clothes, though they cavilled at the want of simplicity displayed by the milliner, no one ever questioned the careful mother's affection for her babe.

The milliner's name was Parabolé.

Poiètes was the father's.

And the tiny girl upon whom the mother lavished so much of her time and substance was





"I was talking of her little frock," was the answer.

Another time the baby was again displayed, the eloquent though mute appeal coming as usual—

"How do you like my darling, my treasure, my all? Look how white, how like marble——"

"Too stiff; too much starch?"

"Starch in the arms of my daughter?" screamed Parabolé.

"I was talking of her little frock," came the reply.

On a third occasion the infant was exhibited, the mute glance again craving for approbation—

"How do you like my darling, my treasure, my all? Did you notice how shapely, how nicely rounded——"

"Too short in the body."

"My pet too short in the body!" gasped Parabolé.

"I was talking of the little frock," said the friend drily.

Then the mother grew wroth. It made her angry to think that people would not or could not see her daughter. Fond as she was of dressing her, it grieved her to think that the

dress absorbed the criticism, and left the child unheeded.

Sorrow often makes us unreasonable. Parabolé quarrelled with Poiètes—who was not to blame. They made up their minds to separate, and she reassumed her maiden name, Ameléia.

She stripped the child of the treacherous frock that diverted people's attention. After which she showed the babe to twelve persons, interrogating mutely as of old.

“How do you like my darling, my treasure, my all?”

One of the twelve said—

“Indecent.”

The other eleven vouchsafed no answer at all.



Moral number one: It is no small offence to obtrude Truth too often, no matter in how pleasant a guise, and so to make it unpalatable and wearisome. Moral number two: If you are to show Truth, never strip her.

* * * *

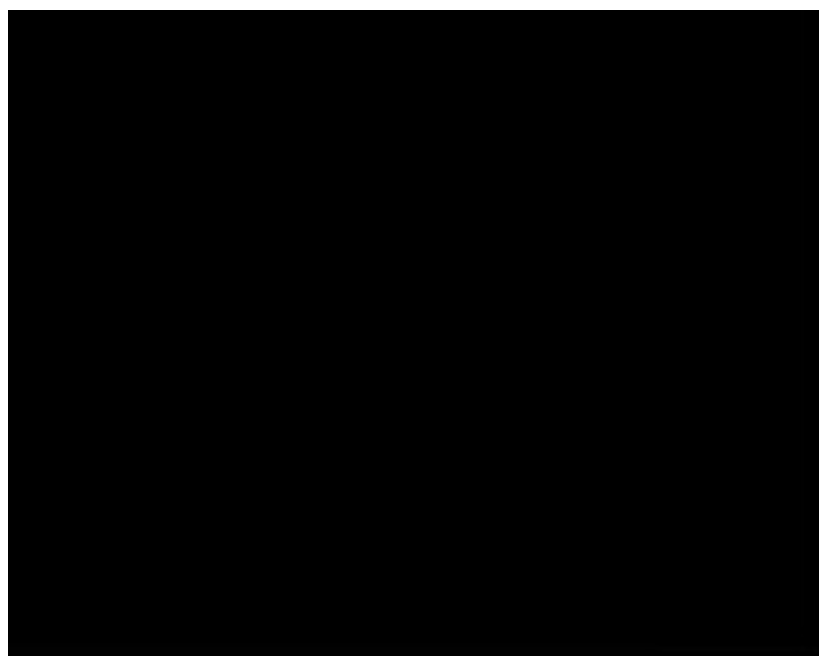
Amelícia means carelessness. But I will give no more translations. Those who are fortunate enough not to know Latin and French and German may ask their big brothers, or the family doctor, or the parson.

A writer who has the time to explain everything has not much to write.

A reader who has not the time to inquire, "What is this?" ought not to read.

ALBERT D. VANDAM.

May, 1878.





LOVE'S IMPENITENCE.

THE

STORY OF HÉLOÏSE AND ABAILLARD RETOLD.

"I am come, Sire, to demand the speedy punishment of a man, who has shown that human nature is more powerful than philosophy."—*Torquato Tasso to Charles IX. of France.*

"May one be pardon'd and retain the offence."

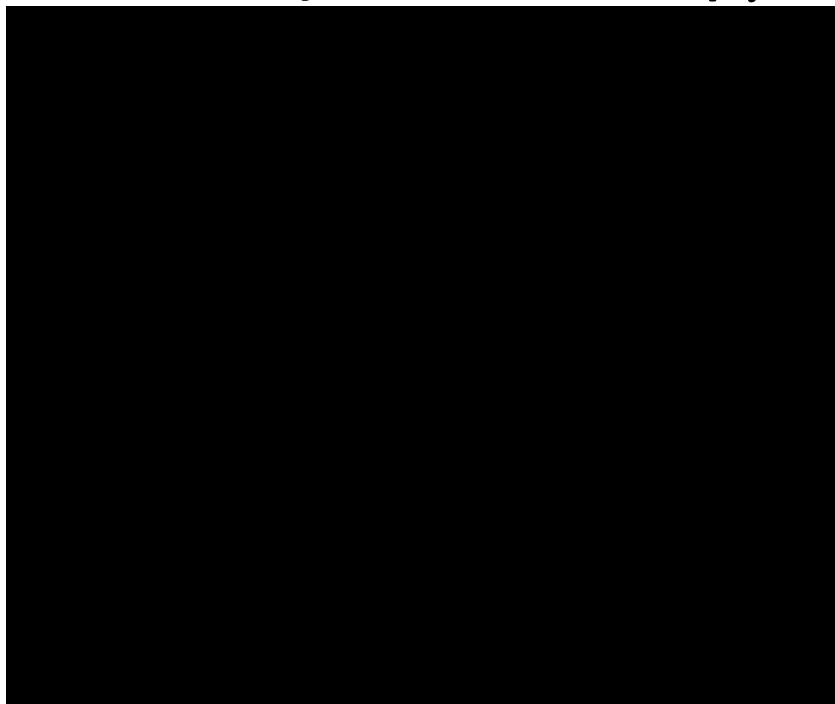
Hamlet.

THE dynasty of conventionality which grows more powerful every day, rather from the fear of ridicule than as the result of the purity of our morals, has made the re-writing of the loves of the "impenitents of the *Paraclete*" a task so difficult, that a pen more skilled than mine might well have shrunk from it. In an age of paraphrase and circumlocution; in a country, standing the second, perhaps the first, in the rank of civilisation, the morals, which are the hypocrisy of nations, must be more or less perfected. Virtue, which, according to La Bruyère, is but the politeness of the soul, is assumed where it exists not; hence we have to



deal with a sham instead of a reality, making the battle a harder one, and less certain in its issue.

Knowing this, the fear of treading on the toes of fastidiousness in relating the love-story of a famous man in all its naked truth, made me pause more than once in my labours. I bethought myself of many a pretext for omitting Abailard from my gallery. The tale had so oft been told by men whose genius left ineffaceable imprints upon it, whose brilliancy would make my efforts unworthy of the smallest notice. Why should I court defeat? &c. &c. But there arose before me the ghost of that traditional manager who endeavoured to play





of these pages. Had I to tell the life of a saint, instead of having to chronicle that of one whom the Roman Catholic Church deems a great sinner, my initial lines would have been the same: *Naturam expellas furcá, tamen usque recurret.* You may attempt to drive Nature away by violence, but she will still return. If this book should share the fate of so many others gone before it—that is, never have its virgin pages brought in contact with the ivory paper-cutter, it would still be a consolation to me—if aught could console me for such a disaster—that my purpose was a good one; that I did not compose it with the sole aim of satisfying what some consider a morbid taste for forbidden literature, but rather with a view of showing how far from perfection our marriage laws are, and must remain, until more powerful thinkers come to tilt their lances against them. But should a pleasanter destiny await my work, should it be read by ever so few, I sincerely hope that amongst them there may be some who, from a mistaken ascetism, would condemn men to perpetual bachelorhood. For those especially I should have liked to write this particular story, knowing that the stricter, the purer, the more ascetic they are, the more they will appreciate my motives, and do me the justice which others may still withhold.

There is a legend—a beautiful and poetical legend—which has traversed the Middle Ages under different titles; which has been revived in the sixteenth century; which Goethe has interpreted on his own account, under the title of the Betrothed of Corinth. I tell it here, not as the *fabliaux* have beautified and ornated it, but as antiquity justifies me in taking it up once more, with every vestige of truth, embodied in its original source. Phlegon, an emancipated slave of the Emperor Hadrian, seems to be its first chronicler.

There was a young man whom his parents had betrothed at an early age to a young girl of Corinth. Some time before the period fixed for the marriage he went to see her who was to be



in bands as that of a corpse? Methinks I have seen and spoken to thee in former times."

"Friend, I am she whom thou hast come to wed. Behold the betrothal ring which thou placedst on my finger at the festival of Dionysius. Behold the formula of the pledge thou didst write on my tablets, when thou swore to be ever mine."

"But why do I see thee thus? Why these attenuated limbs, why these livid features? Preparest thou thyself in this manner for our nuptials?"

"Alas! no nuptials are to be our lot. I belong to the tomb. A whole world divides us; a vow of my sick mother has destined me for the cloister. During thine absence the priests of a new faith have stretched me out, cold, in the deep of the earth, with no other companion than this crucified speechless one, who never bestows even a caress. But love has been strong enough to raise the lid of my bier, for my virginity weighs heavy upon me, and awaits the nuptial night."

"Come to me, my death-like bride; there is fire enough in my body to warm thine, desire enough in my senses to revive thee. Come, and thou shalt know what the ministers of the Church wish to kill in lovers."

Under the influence of his burning kisses she

revives ; on her stony ice-cold front dawns the pink of returning life ; her lips begin to quiver 'neath her lover's pressure, their limbs unite and their bodies melt into one in a mutual embrace. At the hour when Erebus frees the spirits from bondage, they enjoy love's sumptuous feast.

Thus passes the night, a night of sweet converse, its stillness scarcely broken by the hushed voices of the youthful lovers. The girl lingers, loth to repair to her narrow dwelling, when the crowing cock announces the return of the dawn that disperses the phantoms.

"Farewell, farewell," whispers she ; "farewell to thee who hath made me forget the terrors of the icy vaults. I must tear myself away from thee, my beloved ; but to-morrow at midnight

"Oh, terror!" she shrieks, "is it my child come back from another world? . . . Quick, quick! an exorcist to chase this apparition. . . ."

"O, mother! thou art very anxious to send me back to my grave. Thinkest thou then that your priests have nailed it down sufficiently safe with their words? Thinkest thou then that, in spite of them, I shall not return to claim my rights of him whom I love? The Church thinks that she can restrain the desires of a young and ardent nature, that she can hinder the virgin whom she buries from escaping from the prison of the shades to give herself to mortals. Vain imaginings, mother. Know that more than one who has been lowered thither with youth and passion in her heart, has found her way back to earth, and has moved her coffin. . . ."

With this she ceases speaking to her mother to turn to her beloved.

"Enough, treasure mine, thou must follow me and die. Pile up the wood for our funeral rites; we'll mount on it, and we'll return to our own gods."


Well, this young girl, who comes back to her lover in the dead of night, is Nature, who cannot be conquered, and who, suppressed for one moment, revives the next more imperiously and more destructive than ever.

Goethe makes the apparition, in speaking of her lover, say—

“He dead, I will have others, and the entire race of young Sclavs shall succumb to my fury.”

What are these words, if not the expression of the absolute fact that Nature sets her ravenous teeth into the flesh of all; into that of the courtesan, who, driven by her unbridled lust, meets her half-way; into the vestal's or nun's who, by prayers and abstinence, means to flee from her?

Nature is as the Pagan gods of the Middle Ages, to whom the Mother Church ceased not to cry, “You shall die!”. This cry, perpetuated even to our own times, is the greatest proof that they are still alive.



Quai Napoléon a modern structure, fancifully ornated with apocryphal medallions of Héloïse and Abailard. The spot this building occupies was in the twelfth century the entrance to a dark, narrow street, at the beginning of which there stood an humble dwelling, surrounded and smothered, as it were, by similar tenements. A sombre-looking, mean frontage, pierced by tiny apertures, doing duty for windows, and obstructing, rather than admitting, the rare and melancholy daylight. On the left a kind of lean-to wing, at whose base might be seen the first steps of a steep and rickety wooden staircase, gave ingress to an irregular construction, the upper part of which overhung the footway. The street was called the *Rue du Chantre*; the house belonged to Fulbert, Canon of Paris. With him lived Héloïse, by some said to be his niece, by others his daughter, by a nun, whose name has not descended to posterity, if it were ever known to contemporaries.

To give a pen-and-ink sketch of Héloïse would not be difficult if we would content ourselves with cataloguing her charms in the dry-as-dust fashion of an auctioneer. We elect not to do so, however. Even her lover never attempted the thing systematically; not because she was unworthy of being portrayed, but "because hers were not the vulgar charms" that would

Though Abailard avoids providing full-length of the physical person of his mistress, Pope and Colardeau, and after them, had not the same scrupulous imagination, have ruthlessly drawn To us the hidden charm is more Legend and history, however, notwithstanding Abailard's somewhat phrases, in affirming that Héloïse's is a stamp to inspire the most ardent it was not only vigorous and well defined harmonious, and of the most ideal form.

We need not have the same regard dwell upon her mental treasures. were of the highest order, one extract to show.

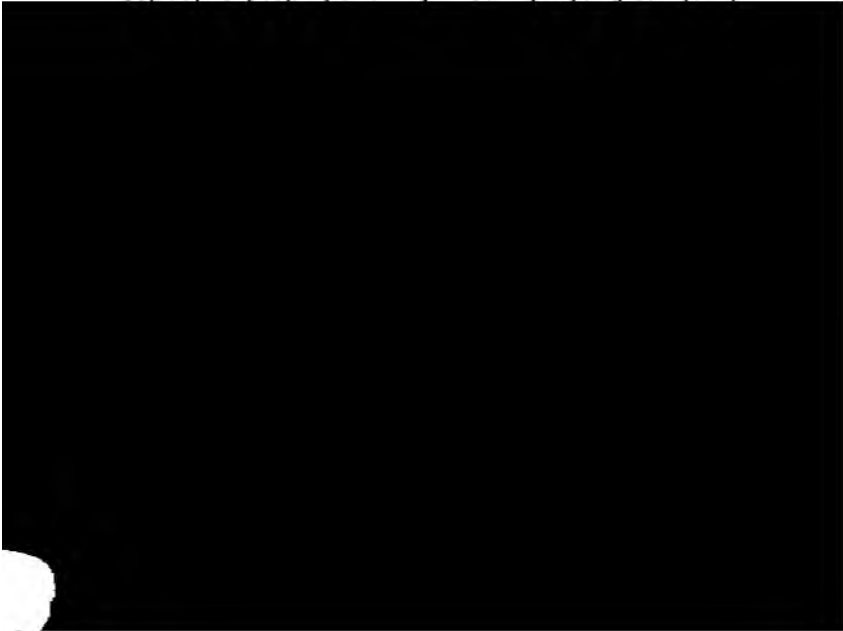
In the retreat where she is to be Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny to her the following letter was written:

it said at that period that a woman, still entangled in the meshes of the world, gave herself with ardour to the study of letters and philosophy, a study in which you have surpassed all women, and vanquished nearly all men."

The portrait of Abailard, the man who could inspire such a woman with a passion, realising Sappho's prophecy of her own, "they will speak of it in futurity," had best be left to that woman herself. We let Héloïse produce the etching, bitten in by the corrosive of regret, graved with the needle of love. She speaks to herself in a moment of introspection. "Couldst thou behold those piercing eyes without remembering all those amorous glances that have proved so dire to thee? Couldst thou contemplate this majestic front of Abailard, and not be jealous of every one who might look with thee on so charming a man? This mouth which thou couldst not admire without the desire to kiss it? Those hands so fit to pillage the treasures of love? Abailard, no woman can meet and behold thee, save at the peril of her body and soul."

Abailard was born in the burgh of Palais, near Clisson, in the diocese of Nantes, about the year 1079. He descended from a noble family. His father's name was Bérenger, his mother's Luce. His biographers tell us that a presentiment of his future genius made his parents call him *Abeilard*

(Unto a bee), wishing to express by it that an eloquence sweeter than honey would be born from his immense learning. The interpretation is purely poetical, and is based upon no foundation whatsoever. He came to Paris to complete his studies, and to acquire a knowledge of Hebrew under Guillaume de Champeaux. Then began that famous rivalry and theological controversy, between nominalism, realism, and rationalism, which it is not our purpose to record, its interest being foreign to our book. Sufficient be it to say that Abailard emerged a victor from the strife; that by the magic of his eloquence he crushed his adversaries, and that at the age of between thirty and thirty-five he found himself the most eminent chief of a





However, from the lips of Abailard himself we learn that his reputation had admitted him on a footing of the greatest intimacy in the house of Fulbert. He had entered into holy orders, and accepted a canonry. Strange to say, this man, in his theologian's gown, turned the head of every woman he met. This doctor, meditating upon Hebrew, found himself provoked at every turn by the shy though passionate glances of fair ones, who gladly would have told him,

"Ah ! pour l'amour du grec, souffrez qu'on vous embrasse."

The love for libertine adventure, gilt by politeness and eloquence ; the feverish pulsations of an amative disposition, which the hopes of a bishopric were powerless to quench, made him aspire no doubt to the possession of a woman. If we are to believe Abailard, it was he who, having heard of a young and learned girl, Héloïse, prepared a trap into which Fulbert allowed himself to fall unconsciously. He offered the old man a sufficiently important sum if he would consent to shelter him under his own roof. Thinking to increase his revenues, while he should at the same time have his daughter's education finished by so renowned a man, without the cost of a single obolus on his part, Fulbert accepted the proposal, asking his guest to assist Héloïse, already so deeply learned, in her studies. At

the same time he granted Abailard every privilege that he himself possessed over her, even to chastise and flog her, if such punishment should be needed to advance her progress. Abailard felt himself surprised at such an arrangement. "I did not cease to wonder at his simplicity, and I was as stupefied as if I had seen him confide a tender lamb to the care of a famished wolf."

"It has ever been the cherished dream of the world," says a great French thinker, "to govern itself to the sound of a gong (by which he evidently means method), rather than by the dictates of good sense and understanding. Héloïse's new tutor did not commit that mistake. He did not confine his pupil to a curriculum of austere



Héloïse's mother. Here and there stools and chairs, with sculptured columns, forming a triple row of arches on the backs. Between the heavy oaken chests the desks, piled up with books in gilt and vellum bindings, and from which are suspended a brass chain and ring, that serve to keep the tomes open. The tables are loaded with movable cylinders, round which are rolled the parchment manuscripts; near them a primitive ink-bowl, with its accompanying crane-quills. Facing the windows, the *horloge*, or *clepsydra*, indicating the too rapid flight of these joyous summer hours.

In the penumbra of a narrow window sits a young girl dressed in a gown of *siglaton*, a silky material, ornamented with nut-like balls, or buttons, in ivory. Double sleeves, the one close to the arm, the other widening from the shoulder, and terminating above the elbow. Her bosom is covered by a neckerchief, not unlike a nun's wimple, of fine linen; her waist is confined by a girdle, from which hangs a bag of black velvet, called the *aumônière* (alms-purse), with the silver clasp.

Thus in the costume of a *gente demoiselle* Héloïse appears, her long tresses confined by the *tresson*, or band. A necklace of beads sets off her snowy throat; on her feet are velvet slippers, the upward-turning points of which peep shyly

from beneath her dress. Near her is Abailard. He has just risen, and his ample gown scarcely conceals the majestic force and vigour, the statuesque form, of the man in the prime of life. A book has fallen from his hands, and has gone to join the *rote* and wire-strung bow lying on the floor. In another moment he bends passionately over the girl, who twines her arms around his neck, and rapturously kisses him. Who shall describe the scene, unless it be Francesca de Rimini, in the words of Dante :—

“ One day
For our delight we read of Lancelot,
How him love thrall'd. Alone we were, and no
Suspicion near us. Ofttimes by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue

Their eyes completed the written text of the pages, henceforth neglected.

"That day we read no more." Nor for many days after, we may be sure. "In this retreat we entertained each other much more with our mutual ardour than with questions of philosophy. We kissed each other much oftener than we explained axioms. My hand stole more frequently round Héloïse's waist than to her books."

There were days, however, when Héloïse, restrained no doubt by some scruple, did not so easily yield to her lover's embraces. On such occasions Abailard did not shrink from treating her, as one would treat a fractious child, of availing himself of the privilege granted by Fulbert, and serving himself of his hands instead of a birch he whipped the beautiful girl, who defended herself from his amorous attempts. Let no reader be surprised at this, but remember the age in which they lived, when it was the custom—a custom perpetuated far into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—to surprise young girls in their beds on Innocents' Day, and to chastise them as one would a child. Lovers were far from reluctant to avail themselves of such a concession, which made Clement Marot longingly exclaim—

“Tres chère sœur, si je savais où couche
Votre personne aux jours des Innocents,
De bon matin j'irais à votre couche
Voir ce corps gent que j'aime entre cinq sens.”

This “very dear sister” happened to be no other than the lovely Marguerite, sister to Francis the First. It is therefore not much to be wondered at that Abailard indulged in a pleasure which custom allowed to every man once a year. More astonishing is the fact that a contemporary writer, M. Michelet, should recommend this same thing to be put in practice with the woman one loves. Strange, but true nevertheless.

How long did those tender interviews remain undiscovered? Sufficiently long to make Abailard confess that passion was so thoroughly dominant within him, that he could no longer devote him-

entirely to him? Fiction has often painted her as the pale heroic victim of a resistless passion. Nothing is less true. It is glorious to have loved, but it is more glorious still to have done so at an epoch when superstition had not yet freed the mind from the dread of the terrible punishments in store for such a crime; at an epoch when the most fearless imagined the earth opening its fiery chasm, to make them expiate their moments of pleasure.

Héloïse knew no such fear; she would have descended the slimy, clammy staircase of hell itself with Abailard, to gather on the brink of the seething crater the sombre, stunted flowers of evil. Her love braved humanity, and almost defied God, in the beginning as well as in the end, when she died in her monastic prison.

It were well if lovers, ancient and modern alike, had taken to heart the teaching of two wise old saws. The first, tersely but vulgarly expressed in the four words, "Kiss, but never tell," is scarcely of less importance than the second, which tells us what we know well enough, but what we are apt to forget under certain exciting circumstances. It simply runs thus: "Beware of the pen." What dire calamities have befallen those who have thrown this advice to the winds! How they have suffered for their indiscretion! From Anacreon to Abailard, from

Abailard to Tasso and Clement Marot, from Clement Marot to the poor nineteenth-century wight arraigned for breach of promise, the lesson taught by indiscriminate effusion is too valuable to be overlooked. Whether these effusions have been worded in language the most poetical or silliest prose, the *peines fortes et dures* suffered in consequence of them are dreadful to contemplate. From the prison of the Italian poet to the hall where modern Justice sits with real scales, and weighs the honour and despair of the maiden deceived at so much per tear, there is but one conclusion: "Possession is not enough, the boasting of it must complete the pleasure."

There is a line in Voltaire, "L'homme est un animal qui aime à se vanter."

priest. Some anonymous biographers have pretended that Fulbert sent his daughter immediately to Corbeil; but the fact receives not the slightest mention in the famous memoirs, known under the title of *Historia Calamitatum*. The two lovers continued to see each other in secret; the dangers of their situation rendered them scarcely more careful. "Once the veil lifted, the scandal did not restrain us," says Abailard; "and the irresistible charms of possession made us deaf and careless to the voice of shame. Hence the same fate befell us one day which, according to mythology, befell Venus and Mars, when taken unawares."

An unexpected event drew them still closer together. Héloïse was about to become a mother, and the but too evident proof of her disgrace made the imbecile old man, her father, more infuriated still. When the lover heard of her precarious condition, he returned in hot haste, watched for the opportune moment, and made her quit the paternal home to conduct her to a place of safety. In the disguise of a nun he succeeded in removing her to the house of his sister Denyse, in Brittany, when she gave birth to a son, whom they named Astrolabe.

Nothing proves that Abailard accompanied her on her journey. On the contrary, he seems to have remained in Paris until Fulbert's return, during

whose temporary absence the flight had been accomplished. He proposed to marry Héloïse, provided the old man would keep the union a secret. The canon consented, and it was then only that Abailard started for Brittany, in order to make her his wife and bring her back to Paris.

But against the marriage project Héloïse opposed every imaginable objection.

"No," said she, "do not you recollect Socrates who joyously departed life because he left Xantippe behind? Is it not sweeter to me to be your mistress than your wife? Shall not love have more power to keep our hearts united than the bonds of hymen?" She was not far wrong. Knowing as we all do confessedly, or uncon-

herself has nothing on record. Mythology alone can afford us but a shadow of what their martyrdom must have been by imagining the punishments of Tantalus, Sisyphus, and Prometheus combined in one.

No novelist could evolve from his imagination a more imperative need for silence than that required by Abailard for a step which, if disclosed, would have barred for ever the brilliant career upon which he had entered.

A scandal like this, coupled with the name of the chief of one of the schools which so powerfully agitated the France of the twelfth century, would have plunged his own party into despair, by giving its adversaries the means of hailing the desertion of their opponents' fiercest champion as a sign of weakness. Héloïse therefore denied upon oath that she was Abailard's wife, and especially to those, who being aware of the outrage, already more than suspected its reparation. Fulbert, after having promised secrecy, finished by persuading himself that a union concealed from every one, left his honour as much compromised as heretofore, and unable to make his daughter proclaim the truth, he recommenced his persecutions. Once more Abailard came to the rescue, and this time carried her off to the convent of Argenteuil, where, under the monastic dress, she passed for having taken the vows.

Love's fermentation usually subsides when the process of marriage has changed passion's sweet intoxicating wine into hymen's cool but sobering vinegar. Hence that rare phenomenon, a really happy marriage. For it requires an almost divine temper to find the bottle that contained but some short time since the luscious grape-juice now containing naught but the acrid biting liquid that shocks the palate, instead of gratifying it. It is a commonly accepted error to think that conjugal love is the love so lauded by the poets as taking possession of all our soul. An error, because it would endow man with the desire to possess what he already enjoys. The nuptial bond obtains this enjoyment of the desired object for us, consequently the wishing

contrivances and stratagems to see you," answered she . . . ; and further on, in her despair at being unable to recommence,—“ If it be a crime thus to live, I love the crime.”

Héloïse's relations, however, were not aware of these stolen interviews. They imagined that Abailard had forced her to take the veil to escape from a marriage which he regretted. A plot was organised between them to be revenged upon him.

One night, while Héloïse's husband was wrapt in deep slumber, in his own house, a servant, tampered with and bribed by Fulbert, admitted to his apartment five men, who after committing a most dastardly outrage on him fled precipitately.

The matter might have remained a secret, had not the prompt assistance required by the victim of this hideous crime spread the news like wildfire through the town.

Two of the conspirators having been caught had their eyes burnt out, and underwent the same treatment as that of which they had made themselves the executioners. Fulbert himself, arraigned before the supreme ecclesiastical court for complicity, escaped with the confiscation of all his property, owing to some mysterious influence. The leniency of this sentence, added to the publicity of the affair, exasperated Abailard.

Says a contemporary of the unfortunate priest, "From all sides were heard the lamentations of his disciples and admirers."

Abailard's degradation determined him to bury his shame henceforth in the solitude of a monastery, and Héloïse, yielding to her husband's absolute wish, could but follow his example. She resolved also to enter the convent for ever.

Abailard took care, however, not to pronounce the vow until he was certain that his wife had done so; consequently we find him insist upon her taking the initiative. The feeling is easily understood, the more as we have Abailard's explanation itself. "My helplessness made me jealous," was his confession to her later on. "I imagined that," (in consequence of what had

Lucan, in the *Pharsalia*, places on the lips of Cornelia.

If aught could have assuaged the cruelty of such a destiny, it was doubtless the particular choice she had made in her place of retreat, the convent of Argenteuil. To describe what passed behind those high walls, impenetrable to everything and everybody, save the perfume of a "mystic love," imported by the joyous, gallant dignitaries of the Church, would require the daring of a Boccaccio, and the subtle pen of a Lafontaine.

"Songez toujours que, couchée on debout,
Le ciel nous fit pour consentir à tout,"

was the text of the sermon so often preached by these ecclesiastical Cicisbeos that it was scarcely surprising that their fair penitents took their maxims *au pied de la lettre*.

Let the reader be persuaded that I do not exaggerate. A curious document of the sixteenth century is sufficient to give an insight into the monastic life led in those days.

Henry the Second (of France), being short of funds, devises with an intimate counsellor about an expedient to find some without having recourse to false coinage.

"Sire," says the Abbé de Brantôme, "I know of two that may serve your purpose."

"What are they?" asks the king.

"The first, sire, would be to sell the charges

and offices of your household to the highest bidder."

"I may as well create a second king of France."

"True ; the alternative seems to me the more reasonable, and will produce, as the other would have done, two millions of gold."

"Perhaps it is the discovery of another America?"

"A wonder that it should not have struck me before ; but it is not that ; it would be sufficient to order the beds of the monks to be sold."

"And where, pray, would you have these poor devils sleep when they no longer have any beds ? They would hardly be satisfied to lie down in the same manner as my royal household."



notes may reveal to us at the same time the state of the monasteries in the twelfth. On that of Argenteuil, Suger, Abbot of St. Denis, has left an incontrovertible and very formal statement: *Papa Honorius, vir gravis et severus, justiciam nostram de monasterio Argentoilensi puellarum miserimâ conversatione infamato.*

Héloïse was not excluded from this verdict. To the reader who, having created for himself an ideal of what love should be, objects to this conduct on the part of Heloïse, and supports his objection by the much belaboured line that "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," I can only quote another saying of an authority no less great in such matters—"That it is not altogether unpleasant to be loved by proxy, provided the proxy be not a disagreeable one." In that way, one betrays the lover a bit, while remaining faithful to love. *Qui a bu, boira.* Perhaps the ancients meant to convey a deeper meaning than we are aware of in representing Cupid—who is the personification of pure nascent love only—blindfolded. The sightless born is more apt to be contented with his lot than the one who, once blessed with the powers and enjoyments of vision, is suddenly bereft of them. "You may find women," says La Rochefoucauld, "who never had a gallant adventure; it is rare to find a woman who never had but one." She,



who in after-days addressed the most passionate love-epistles to her husband from the *Paraclete* entreating him to come to her, never pens one from Argenteuil; hence we may conclude that his absence was compensated for.

How long Héloïse remained at Argenteuil we cannot with any certainty determine, probably a little more or less than six years before she and her sister-nuns were driven from it for misconduct. But of this we shall speak shortly.

What became of Abailard during all this time? His monastic life had been inaugurated by one of these bold innovations so familiar to him. He had dared to maintain that the



Ghost, which he named the *Paraclete*. At the same time he created a new chair of divinity for those disciples that had followed him. But the continual fears for his surety induced him to accept the abbotship of St. Gildas de Ruys, in Brittany.

The monks with whom Abailard had lived at St. Denis, and those whom he directed at St. Gildas, were worthy brethren of the *religieuses* of Argenteuil.

Fate, or call it what you will, reader, was about to bring Héloïse and Abailard into each other's presence once more, after a separation of many years.

* * * * *

"Black-browed Melancholy inhabits these woods, these caverns, these vaults containing naught but tombs. It spreads around a silence like unto death; its dark and corpse-like presence withers every charm of Nature, once so smiling; it dulls the flowers' brilliancy, it darkens the foliage and the grass, it mocks with terror the splash of the waves that seem to murmur as they rush headlong against the rocks. A mysterious horror pervades the spot."

Such is part of the description given by Héloïse of the asylum offered to her by her husband, after she and her companions had been driven from Argenteuil by Suger, Abbot of St.

Denis, who had made the saturnalia of these Christian bacchantes a pretext to instal monks into their places. Such was the convent whence were to be written in burning characters those famous letters that should invest Abailard once more with something of his former ardour and passion. The action acquires a tenfold new intensity when we consider the spot whence were launched these terrible imprecations, that broke themselves like a winter's hurricane against the walls of a monastery's cell. "Here the most noble passions, love and glory, must die!" exclaims Héloïse, on beholding the retreat which is to be her living tomb.



have to supplicate a long while before he will consent to leave his retreat.

"Go," writes Héloïse in anger, "the torch of love burns not for the dead. The danger of loving exists no longer for thee. Nature keeps silent. Passion only animated thee, and cold indifference now reigns in thy heart."

At other times, finding diatribes and rhapsodies alike unsuccessful to bring her lover to her side, she employs stratagem. She reminds him that it is his duty to visit the monastery which he has built and dedicated.

How could he have possibly resisted the passionate prayers of this Christian Circe, hidden in the deep of the desert, and whose voice in turns assumes the melancholy sighing of the turtle-dove, or the dramatic transport of a Dido or Ariadne?

Abailard yielded at last. He came to the *Paraclete* and his visits were frequently renewed. We will not follow the old chroniclers in their suspicions—suspicions but too clearly justified by the defence of the accused himself—of what happened at these interviews; we will merely ask one question: "Does not speech itself play the most important rôle in love affairs?" We have all heard of the sneers of the Roman courtesans at the expense of the patrician ladies, who abandoned themselves to their lovers, mute as

stones. Abailard's gift of eloquence must, therefore, in all charity, not be overlooked. We must also take into account that Héloïse was not an ordinary woman, but endowed with the highest mental gifts, that must have made her conversation something more than agreeable. Nay, if we are to believe the evidence of contemporary bishops and prelates, Héloïse had founded at the Abbey of the Holy Ghost a college where rhetoric, philosophy, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew were taught.

Though she might have been proud of such an act, it did not prevent the inmates of that school from indulging in the profligacy and debauch current in those times. From one of her own letters we find that "a young nun, by a strata-



planet of the "world to come;" it is she who was, in some respects, its geographer. Betwixt her and those who were sleeping in six feet of cold earth her fancies and thoughts spanned a subterranean bridge. The elements became, under her interpretation, the language of the spirits hovering in the air. The subtle sighing of the wind was listened to as to the appeal of a soul in distress. The tortures of her isolation led her to imagine similar anguish among the inhabitants of the Schéol. She thus became the first legend-teller of the new societies.

A time came when the voice of Abailard ceased to answer to that of Héloïse. Out of the three score and ten years of life commonly allotted to man, there is one decade only in which he truly may be said capable of conceiving a passion in the highest sense of the word—that is, from thirty to forty. Before that time what he thinks love is nothing but *amourette*; after that time it is worse, it is *amouraille*.

This wholesale statement does apply almost strictly to the birth of a new feeling. The continuance of the old one, sprung up in the ten years mapped out by Nature for these births, does not depend upon age. That the violent transports abate as we grow older, I have no need to state.

Those who would trace Abailard through the

various stages of his increasing years have but to follow the course of letters which he sent to the *Paraclete*. There are some, notably the latter ones, of which it might, without fear of contradiction, be said, *C'est le style fait moine*, for passion dies in them as on the bare couch of the penitent. Love's fiercest flame, without leaping up and raging as under the pen of Héloïse, had nevertheless shown in this puissant organisation sufficient flashes to make us aware of the day when it suddenly becomes extinguished. "Old age is the hostelry of languors ; they pour in through every crevice."

It is in this hostelry that the saints, male and female, are generally found. Hence witness the gradual metamorphosis of Abailard in the cano-



his mind to repair to the celestial city, and was already on his way thither, when, passing through Cluny, he fell in with Peter the Venerable, who persuaded him to enter his own order and attempt nothing further with the Pope. At the same time he brought about a reconciliation between Abailard and Bernard, his most inveterate enemy, and some time afterwards the Pope, at the request of the Abbot of Cluny, gave him back all his prerogatives.

A gradual wasting away came upon Héloïse's husband. He migrated to the priory of St. Marcel, at Châlons-sur-Saône, to recruit his health; but the keenness of the air aggravated his disease, and he breathed his last in the arms of one of his staunchest friends, Peter the Venerable.

His remains were surreptitiously conveyed to the *Paraclete*, where they were interred in one of the small chapels, on the spot where Abailard had first erected his primitive oratory, composed of stubble and bamboo canes.

Who shall describe Héloïse's feelings, face to face with the, to her, sacred corpse? Our pen is not powerful enough. Henceforth she merely exists. She ceases to live from the day when the parchment no longer receives the imprints of these characters, which made him who inspired them exclaim, "I could not read a single one of

your thoughts without pressing them to my lips, still burning with the same desires, with the same fires that consumed my soul in our secret interviews." Renouncing the empire over any other heart, Héloïse, like Aphrodite bewailing her beloved, might have said, "My girdle has perished with thee."

To know Héloïse thoroughly, we must see and appreciate her in her letters. In them she appears, her brow crowned with myrtle, like the priestesses of Venus assisting at the philosophic banquets of ancient Hellas. Her passion sighs and murmurs in every line. *Sa parole a un sexe*, says Guizot. We perceive that her words flow, they are not strung together, *Elles se talonnent*, (literally, "they tread on each other's

trembled in a kind of longing embrace towards her who had come to join him.

Héloïse never knew that repentance which the Dryasdusts are so fond of ascribing to women, whom the peril of a false step draws into a convent. "Could I forget thee, and hate my weakness?" exclaimed she, during her long isolation; "its cause is ever present within me. I feel that I love its author too much to destroy it. How can one separate the cherished object from the crime he made us commit?"

* * * * *

My story is finished. One word before I lay down my pen after a task, which, whatever my sympathies with it may have been, was accomplished with many sore misgivings as to its results in the opinion of the public. This word must, in the first instance, be addressed to those who, while condemning the sin, never fail to make a pilgrimage to the supposed grave of the sinners—supposed, I say advisedly—for it has been amply proved in a letter, dated November, 1872, by M. Viollet-le-Duc, that the splendid monument in the cemetery of Père-Lachaise contains not a fragment of the bones of the unhappy lovers, not a handful of their ashes. Since the year 1792 they have been lost beyond recovery. It would be well, therefore, before setting out upon this sight-seeing journey,

to remember the deception practised upon Tristram Shandy. He had read that a mausoleum had been constructed near one of the gates of Lyons in memory of two lovers who died at that place, and from that moment his imagination led him to the spot. He had promised himself to see this monument before he died. One day he started on his way. "I knew the tomb of the lovers as if I had lived in Lyons for twenty years," he says. "I knew that I had to turn to the right when beyond the gate that leads to the suburb of Vaise. I was transported with joy along the whole of the road. When I perceived the gate that obstructed my view of the tomb, I felt my heart on fire. 'Tender and faithful spirits,' I exclaimed, 'long, too

vented by the curiosity and relic dealer—who, having shown a lady the head of Cromwell, found to his surprise that it had been already shown to her elsewhere that same morning. “That, madam,” said the clever individual, “was Cromwell’s head when a boy, this one is his head when a man.”

In the second instance, this word must be addressed to those who so energetically claim the absolute empire of the soul, and who profess not to aspire to the possession of matter.

Lights of the Catholic Church, you forbid, interdict, passion and love to the descendants of the Anthonies and Jérômes; and you reproduce the corslet of the Virgin of Nazareth in the finest Carrara marble. You say, “Flee the tempting form of the flesh,” and you hew out this fall of the shoulders, this heaving of the bosom whence descends the royal mantle of the beauteous queen of the firmament. You forbid the lips to give the palpitating kiss; and, hour by hour, the neophyte meets with the mysterious smile of the celestial Joconde.

Were it not well to remember that these men of whom you would make living corpses—these women whom you would bury in a grave on the earth, have their human hearts? In wishing to enforce celibacy, do not you create a something which is worse, and shall be nameless, which is coexistent with the origin of society,

but which civilisation is destroying by preaching temperance, not abstinence?

One day love is consecrated in the name of Jehovah in the assemblies of the Saints; to-morrow it is proscribed in the name of Jehovah also. Yesterday, a holy prophet dallied amorously on Sion's terraces with a young Shulamite; to-morrow, the representative of the same dogma, surprised in a nun's cell, is ostracised from his sect, and condemned to bewail his fatal passion with less consolation than David, to whom the prophet at least left his lyre to sing his regrets. All these contradictions remind one of the prayer of the man, who could no longer find his way in the intricacies of his belief. "Lord, I can understand nothing of these disputes that are in-

because it had been strangled ; the third, because it was a fast, and I ought to have eaten fish. A Brahmin, who was just passing, and to whom I appealed for judgment, said to me : ' They are wrong, for apparently you have not killed the animal yourself.' ' Yes I have,' answered I. ' Then you have committed a most abominable sin, which God will never forgive, for how know you that the soul of your father was not in this beast !' All these things confuse me, O Lord ; I can no longer stir for fear of offending You."

Here I must conclude with a simple question to the modern representatives of asceticism. " Were the sufferings of Abailard and Héloïse deserved? Were the persecutions of his contemporaries justified? Was Solomon, with his eleven hundred concubines, less wise or less devout than you, who would enforce to this day the same laws by which Abailard was persecuted, and which drove two of God's beings from a world where their genius might have benefited mankind?" The cloister is not necessary to live well ; one can live as virtuously in the world, and perhaps more virtuously. In the world one has sudden aspirations to God ; but in the cloister, all the reactions are in favour of the world. When will you cease to condemn men

"To fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in his days of nature,
Are burnt and purged away."





AN UNREQUITED LOVE.

PETRARCH AND LAURA.

“Dans l’amour il y a le plus souvent une personne qui aime et l’autre qui est aimée. L’amour-propre chez cette dernière supplée au sentiment qu’elle n’a pas.”—SAINT-PROSPER.

“That man that hath a tongue, I say, is no man,
If with his tongue he can not win a woman.”

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

MAN’S love is of a man’s life a thing apart; ’tis woman’s whole existence,” Donna Julia writes to Don Juan, repeating in different words Mme. de Staël’s axiom, that, *L’Amour est l’histoire de la vie des femmes; c’est un épisode dans celle des hommes.* “A mere assertion,” sceptics will exclaim. It is an incontrovertible truth. Two small sentences prove the difference, the abyss of feeling between the man and the woman who love. “I am yours,” says the one. “She is mine,” says the other. It is the difference between giver and receiver. If we analyse our masculine loves with a severe and searching eye, we shall find many elements in them foreign to love; vanity and sensual desire

scarcely leave this passion a fourth part of our soul, without reckoning even that in this remainder there is still room for our dreams of glory and ambition. The artist, the man of science, the speculator, continue to be such on becoming lovers; it is near the beloved one that they bewail their defeats or boast of their triumphs, but they wail and boast. The woman who loves, loves and can do nothing but love. Molière found two combinations for his genius in Harpagon; he has depicted him in love though a miser; he has left him a miser though in love. Had he taken for his type a woman he would have made avarice vanish in the presence of love.* Love, in fact, takes root so deeply in the soul of woman that, not only does it completely



girl, what is the result? Instead of being purified by her contact, he corrupts her by his presence. Women often find all the virtues in their affection; we generally introduce all our vices into ours. If accident or caprice throws into the way of a man, enamoured of one woman, another woman whom he does not love, but whose beauty or position flatters his vanity, he blesses his good fortune and takes advantage of it; a woman really in love shrinks with horror from such duplicity, were the other man a hero or a king. History tells us of more than one who preferred death to such a sacrifice; notwithstanding which, I could name half a dozen or more who abandoned themselves to the object of their hatred in order to save the object of their love. Statistics prove that out of twenty girls under eighteen sentenced for theft, the majority commit the crime to assist or save their lovers. After this no one will dispute that love is the history of woman's life, while it is a mere episode in that of man.

It is not surprising therefore that, whenever and wherever the exception occurs, whenever a man's love fills the whole of his existence, the phenomenon should be eagerly caught at by biographers and novelists as a foundation whereon to erect a structure more or less fanciful in design, and in harmony with the biographer's or novelist's own feelings, but, unfortunately,

nearly always drifting into exaggeration, stranding either on the bare rocks of platonism and sentimentality, or else getting engulfed in the whirlpool of the "fleshy" or erotic school. That a story like Petrarch's could not escape these ordeals need not be said. Taken as the theme for innumerable biographies, romances, essays, the Italian poet has in turns been represented in the guise of an angel, or in that of a demon, rarely in his true character of a being "very human indeed." He has been credited with virtues and vices alike impossible and false.

"Nature well known, no prodigies remain," says Pope. Analyse Petrarch's nature dispas-



foundation, a most solid one—viz. the immense influence he exercised on the literature and progress of his own and succeeding centuries; the great part he played in the affairs of his country; his contributions to the solution of the weightiest problems in politics, erudition, and philosophy, should have been overlooked, save by the learned few; yet it is an undoubted fact that this glorious and brilliant genius would scarcely be remembered in our days were it not for his hopeless passion for a woman, who, to use a vulgar phrase, “made a fool of him.” Not to hoodwink ourselves, for one who reads the sonnets, in which he sings that passion and the object of it, for the sake of their elegance of diction, their poesy of imagery, their brilliancy of metaphor, there are thousands of love-sick youths and maidens who simply peruse them to get at the truth of this love-intrigue. Nay, more; millions rhapsodise about Petrarch and Laura as the living emblems of constancy and virtue, who have never seen a line of the former’s verses, either in the original or translated.

If in reducing this so-called constancy of the man, this austere virtue of the woman, to human proportions, the gold is found to be pinchbeck, let no one blame me. If, after wearing for many years a spade guinea to your chain, you enter a goldsmith’s shop to have it tried and

are told it is only brass, the fault cannot be imputed to the goldsmith; you went voluntarily to him. If you are afraid, reader, of seeing the gilt washed off that pretty medal of Petrarch and Laura's love in an uncompromising bath of truth's aqua-fortis, you had better skip this essay and go on to the next.

Petrarch was born in the fourth year of the fourteenth century, an age in which philosophy and religion, by tilting against it, conspired as it were with the chivalrous manners of the times, rushing to its defence, to flatter and embellish the most irresistible of all human propensities. The paralysing apocalyptic terror of the year One



on the imagination. The wandering minstrels vied with each other in metamorphosing the most lovely women into celestial beings; their poetical and impassioned illusions were always well received, for they condoned the excesses of sensuousness, they covered with a sublime varnish love's venality. This ideal state of things did not prevent adultery becoming the recompense of the triumphant hero. "A facility in yielding to love was the least equivocal mark of a benevolent mind;" constancy, disinterestedness, and submission to the sex, though the never-absent themes of the lay and romance, in reality did not exist. The knight-errant's constancy to his ladye-love meant the inconstancy of that ladye-love to her spouse. Disinterestedness meant the spoliation of the husband to gratify the extravagances of the paramour. Submission to the sex meant the trampling on woman, as in the case of William the Conqueror and Mathilda of Flanders. Beauty, rank, domestic virtues, had no merit except as they were celebrated by the adoration of a lover and the passion of a poet. The genius producing such poetry was valued at little in comparison with the force of the passion that inspired the genius. Agnese de Navarre, Countess de Foix, openly commanded Guillaume de Machaut to write and publish in verse the history of their loves, and contemporary

opinion hailed the chansons as a tribute to her character of a virtuous princess, whilst the husband acquiesced in the verdict. The position of husbands in those days had best be defined by the fundamental principle underlying every law promulgated by the *Cours d'Amour*: not an imaginary institution as some writers have tried to prove, but a *de facto* established school and tribunal, in which prizes were decreed to the best poets and most faithful lovers, where problems of gallantry were solved, proceedings were instituted, individuals condemned. Husbands were without the pale of these courts, either as complainants, defendants, or witnesses. Their testimony could not be received, for it was written that *en amour tout est grâce : et dans le mariage*



privileges to trench upon those of the former, it was in direct contravention of the laws laid down.

Where did the empire of the husband finish? Where did the domain of the lover begin? The edict is terse and explicit: *Au mari la personne, et à l'amant l'âme.*

A page from the charming biography of Bayard by his equerry will explain the respective rôles. "The good knight had been brought up in his youth at the court of the Duke of Savoy, and young people being fond of associating, he was often thrown into the society of a beautiful girl attached to the personal service of the duchess, and for whom he soon conceived a tender affection. The feeling was mutual, and so sincere, though honourable throughout (*sans sortir de l'honnêteté*), that they would have united themselves in wedlock, regardless of the consequences their poverty might have entailed upon them. But the Duke of Savoy having given Bayard as page to Charles VIII., the lovers were parted; and when many years after the knight came back to Carignan, he found that his lady had been married, by order of the duke, to the Seigneur de Fluxas. She, however, as a virtuous woman, wished to let him know that the honest love she had borne him in his youth lasted still, and therefore showed him every possible kindness. 'Monseigneur de Bayard, my friend,' said she,

‘this is the spot in which you were brought up ; it would be unbecoming if in it you did not keep up the honour of your name the same as in France and Italy, where everybody speaks of you.’ The gallant nobleman answered her : ‘Tell me, lady, what I am to do?’ ‘Meseems, Monseigneur de Bayard (I trust I am not asking too much), that you ought to give a tournament in this town.’ ‘It shall be done, lady. You are the lady who first enlisted my heart in your service ; and well assured as I am never to possess aught but your lips and your hands*—for to request more would be lost labour ; and besides, on my soul, I would prefer death to your dishonour—I now pray you to give me one of your mittens.’ Which request was granted. The day following, a herald

plished should be attributed to Madame de Fluxas, for it was she who had lent him her mitten, and to her alone belonged the prize.' The Chevalier de Fluxas, who well knew the noble and upright motives of the good knight, felt not the least jealous; but, accompanied by the Seigneur de Grammont, went straight to his wife to hand her the mitten and the ruby, and to tell her the exact words of Bayard. She, who had received so many proofs of his noble disposition, was not at all abashed, but replied: 'Since Monseigneur de Bayard is good enough to say that my mitten was the cause of his winning the prize, I will keep it all my life in his honour.' In the evening there was dancing and feasting, but the next day we departed. The knight went to take leave of the lady—not without the shedding of copious tears on her part, and he himself felt very sad at heart. This honourable affection between these two lasted till their death; not a year passed but they sent each other presents."*

This short extract tells us more of the marriage customs of those times than a volume of arguments. The narrative reveals a fact which, strange as an exception, is nevertheless general as a rule—viz. that in the Middle Ages there

* *Vie de Bayard*, par son Ecuyer.

existed for woman a union outside—or, rather, side by side—with the marriage bond; for her husband were reserved her person, marital fidelity, cares, and external attentions; for her lover, the soul, the more elevated aspirations of the spiritual life. Every virtuous lady might, nay, was bound to, have a husband and a friend, rivals without hatred, co-proprietors without envy—for their pretensions did not clash. We have just now seen how the Chevalier de Fluxas was not in the least jealous, for he knew the honest motives of Bayard. To these gross and unrefined husbands it was sufficient that the wife remained faithful in the act; their thoughts they did not presume to control. The lover was an accepted and recognised personage. He had his rights which



love-code made of the woman the guide and companion of man.

Chivalry and the poesy of the Provençals, in reality the creators of this theory of the influence of the beloved woman, unexpectedly found an auxiliary in the greatest master-mind of the Middle Ages.

Suddenly there rang out upon the world the name of a woman-child—the name of Beatrice, the model of feminine purity hitherto unknown, which the genius of Dante placed on the threshold of modern civilisation and poetry. This creature, who becomes more beautiful in proportion to her lover becoming more divested of all earthly longings ; these two hearts, impelled by one another towards the infinitude of good, presented a spectacle at once so real and so ideal, that men discovered in Beatrice the mistress (the term is used in its most elevated sense), such as the earth might vouchsafe, as heaven promised. Spell-bound they glanced, their imagination following these two into the celestial regions. *Ella guardava suso, ed io in lei.*

Under such circumstances and in the midst of a society big with contagious idealism, virtuously disposed himself, but eager and impatient for celebrity, his mind disgusted with the actual condition of the world and occupied in the conception of an imaginary happiness, Petrarch met with Laura.

Was she a familiar figure among the crowd at the court of Pope John XXII? History sayeth not. We may take it for granted, however, that if not a frequent visitor, she was at least not unknown there. Nay, we may go further still, and assume that as the daughter of the Chevalier Audebert de Noves, Syndic of Avignon, as the wife of Count Hugues de Sades, who held the first offices in the town, as a young and beautiful woman, she had attracted some notice, enhanced, no doubt, by the reputation of a blameless life and angelic piety. "In the country of the blind the one-eyed is king." The fact that no biography mentions a lover or a *cavalier servente* in connexion with her name is already sufficient evidence that she must have been unlike her

“ Un jour une femme inconnue,
À genoux priait près de moi ;
Et je me sentis à sa vue
Tout ému de plaisir et d'effroi.”

Scribe's lines from Donizetti's *Favorita* accurately describe the circumstances and the feelings with which Petrarch for the first time saw her whose image was henceforth ever present to him, not so vividly, perhaps, as he would lead us to think, but sufficiently clear and distinct to serve the poet's purpose of making this image a peg whereon to hang his outpourings, which he forthwith does.

“ Till this moment I was a stranger to love ; but its brightest flame was now lighted up in my soul.” In another sonnet he says, “ Hitherto I feared not love. My affections, cold as ice, formed around my heart a crystal rampart. Tears were strangers to my eyes, my sleep was undisturbed, and I saw with astonishment in others what I had never experienced in myself. Such have I been. Alas ! what am I now ?”

As a burst of genuine feeling, as a sample of taking himself to task, this reads probably very fine ; but dispassionate candour viewing the sonnet by the light of subsequent events is almost tempted to answer to his query, “ Alas ! what am I now ?” “ A sentimental ninny, a Guppy, *plus* the genius, which alone saves you

from the ridicule so liberally bestowed upon Dickens's creation."

We have all heard of Horne Tooke's reply to his uncle when the latter told him to take a wife: "Whose wife shall I take, uncle?" It would seem that the mediæval churchmen had reduced this theory to practice long before the eighteenth century divine immortalised the method by an epigram. That Petrarch was an ecclesiastic, although he does not appear to have ever taken the binding vows of a priest, and that Laura was the wife of another man, makes, the corrupt morals of the time considered, little or no difference to the question. I am not playing the part of *censor morum* here. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*




moment I can convince another mind thereof," remarks Novalis. Nothing strange, therefore, in Petrarch's acquainting Laura with the passion he had conceived for her. But from the very outset he received little or no encouragement.

Though treated with so much severity, he was not disheartened. Not being admitted into her house until many years afterwards, he went to all the festivals where there was the remotest chance of catching a glimpse of her. The author of these pages will candidly confess that neither in literature nor in real life has he ever met with a love-sick young man who took his snubbings so good-naturedly as did Petrarch. To say that he *faisait bonne mine à mauvais jeu*, would convey but an inaccurate idea of the self-deception he practised to make himself believe that everything was for the best. The world also had to be hoodwinked as to the nature of his designs upon Laura.

"I bless the happy moment," thus runs one of the sonnets, "that directed my heart to Laura. She led me to see the path of virtue, to detach my heart from base and grovelling objects; through her I am inspired with that celestial flame which raises my soul to heaven, and directs it to the Supreme Cause, as the only source of happiness."

The mystic, or to call it by its vulgar name,

the high-falutin language which he employs, here and elsewhere, in speaking of the woman who reigned in his heart, has impressed many with the notion that Petrarch's love was singularly free from all earthly and sensual thought. To them it is some transcendental, ultra-Platonic passion, altogether beyond the ordinary ken of humanity. These many, as I have before indicated, are the disciples of the sentimental school, who never read more than the first chapter of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, who maintain that the antique couple kept conversing with each other to the end through the chink in the wall; who aver that Juliet allowed Romeo to scale the balcony and enter her bedroom from fear he





—a son and a daughter. The first died before his father; the second married in Lombardy, and outlived him many years. This *en passant*, nor would I have unearthed this bit of evidence save to show that their idol was addicted to these little peccadillos in common with the rest of his sex.

“Ah!” they, the sentimentalists, will exclaim, “Petrarch’s purity should be judged by his passion for Laura alone.” Though it sounds almost as ridiculous as the *Si ç’ avait été toute autre que vous, madame*, which that wicked old gossip Brantôme places in the mouth of one of his knights, we will even let it pass, and test Petrarch’s morals as they wish. But to do this we should have to ignore his writings altogether, every line of which demonstrates irrefragably that Laura’s admirer was to the full as human as any other lover. In the sonnets, in the *canzoni*, in his dialogues with St. Augustine, we could find more than one passage in support of the opinion we advance. Petrarch has desired, hoped, solicited—there is no doubt of it. To deny his desires, his hopes, his supplications, we should have to deny the very sense of the words, the most natural and legitimate acceptance of the terms to which the poet has confided the expression of his thoughts. If no desire had ever risen in the breast of Petrarch—if he had never

allowed himself to hope and to ask for a realisation of that hope—how shall we explain the reproaches Laura addresses to him? If the lover had never claimed aught, why should Laura have said to him, “I am not what you take me for?” Would she resent in that way a mute and constantly respectful adoration? We can hardly believe it.

And this brings us to the object of his passion. That Petrarch first saw in her only the most beautiful of women—one whom he was destined to love—one who animated and ennobled his talents—that he regarded her in the form of an angel of virtue, we have no hesitation in confessing. At last, however, he felt, and was compelled to admit “that she was a woman—



stake coin of equal value. The one may place counters, the other gold." And Laura de Sades did not even place counters. She played *sur parole* throughout the game, and without the least intention of redeeming her word. Had she refused downright to take up the cards, the world could not have had much to say.

We have previously stated that from the outset Petrarch received little or no encouragement. But this withholding of her countenance partook in no way of an honest determination to cut off his hopes there and then—to let him know, once for all, that he had nothing to expect. If so, she would have been worthy of all the admiration, rapture, and rhapsody he bestowed on her in his verses. We ourselves would have been glad to pay tribute to such unswerving high-mindedness. What do we find, however? The dissimulation of a sentimental coquette, taking a keen delight in the vanity of possessing charms that are fatal to her admirers; proud of the passion she has inspired, without loving in the least the man who is its victim; indifferent to literature and poetry—*E non curò giammai rime nè versi*—but pleased with the celebrity they give her; invariably acting with the utmost calmness, and thereby gaining an ascendancy which every person who acts thus must inevitably acquire over an impassioned character.

While there is at times in Petrarch's love an exaltation, a sincerity which disarm ridicule, there is throughout in Laura a cold-bloodedness, a double-dealing, that evoke disgust. Let no one call it virtue controlling passion ; for though these two feelings may meet in woman's breast as friends, they never reign long together with equality of power ; sooner or later the one must yield to the dictatorship of the other. "That love should not have been, during twenty years, subdued by resolute virtue, nor virtue overpowered by love, is a phenomenon that can be conceived only as among the ideal possibility of things." Therefore, though Petrarch himself occasionally fancied it so strongly as to make us believe that Laura really loved him, a careful examination of



Angry as we are with Petrarch for persisting in hanging his picture awry, his genius makes us patient with him, for we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that love, understood like this, is not only a song of praise to loveliness, it is also a hymn to the heart and to the intellect. We no longer think of the woman who put into practice Beaumarchais' famous axiom to the fair sex, nearly five centuries before he issued it, *La Nature dit à la femme; sois belle si tu peux, sage si tu veux, mais sois considérée, il le faut*; be it said, however, that not Nature, but society gave such advice. We no longer think of Petrarch; we only see the poet, who creates an idol, to whom he not only sings, "What I love in you is not your beauty, your youth, the melting tenderness of your eyes, the ruby freshness of your lips," but, "your heart, which is open to every generous sentiment, your intellect which divines every noble thought, bind me to you with a chain which time is powerless to shatter. Your beauty will pale, your eyes will lose their brilliancy, your lips their freshness, but youth fleeing will not take with it my love."

For Laura we care nothing; not so for the picture he drew of her, and which his imagination conceived to be the Laura of whom he was taking his leave.

“ A tender paleness stealing o’er her cheek,
Veil’d her sweet smile as ’t were a passing cloud,
And such pure dignity of love avow’d,
That in my eyes my full soul strove to speak :
Then knew I how the spirits of the blest
Communion hold in Heav’n ; so beam’d serene
That pitying thought, *by ev’ry eye unseen,*
Save mine, wont ever on her charms to rest.
Each grace angelic, each meek glance humane,
That Love e’er to his fairest votaries lent,
By this were deem’d ungentle cold disdain !
Her lovely looks with sadness downward bent,
In silence to my fancy seem’d to say
Who calls my faithful friend so far away ?

Lady Dacre's Translation.

Convinced of the folly of his first hopes, Petrarch resolved to travel, fancying that change of scene would efface this woman’s image from his heart. Vain imaginings. He had created an angel for himself in Laura. To cure him of



Love not only led, but followed him everywhere ; love was part of himself. In the sombre forest, by the babbling brook, under the burning sun of Provence, or towards the close of the day, when twilight calm and serene seemed to invite sweet reveries, at all hours, in all spots, Laura's lover was always the same. Ever giving the rein to his imagination, he fruitlessly sought in Nature a balm for his sufferings ; the still small voice of his heart brought him back to the adored image and closed his eyes to the beauty of the landscape, or if for a moment it beguiled him into bestowing a more than cursory glance at the valleys stretched at his feet, at the mountains rearing their wooded crowns above him, at the flowery plains golden with the setting sun, and melting into one with the horizon, at the clouds sailing aloft, in every object he beheld something of Laura. In the amber corn he saw her blond tresses, in the murmur of the rustling leaves he heard the sound of her footsteps ; the low chant of the brook, whose limpid spray kissed the yellow sand, reminded him of the velvety accent of her voice. Often swayed by the illusion, he spoke to Laura as if she were near him, and was surprised that her answer fell not upon his ear. Thus travel, instead of calming, instead of curing him, increased his trouble and agitation. Each morn he left the shelter where he had passed the

night ; each morn he took up his pilgrim's staff ; new horizons unrolled themselves before his eyes ; he chastised, almost broke, his body with fatigue, but could not succeed in driving from his heart the image of the adored one ; until tired of the perpetual struggle, he began to regret the very air Laura breathed, the paths her foot pressed, the protecting hedges behind which he had hidden himself to watch her beauteous front, the cherry lips which a jealous veil in vain concealed from the eager curiosity of the lover. He even regretted the reproaches, the impatience, the anger he had read in her looks. His sufferings, with which he had taunted Heaven as with so many injustices, now returned to his memory like blissful moments like hours of delight for

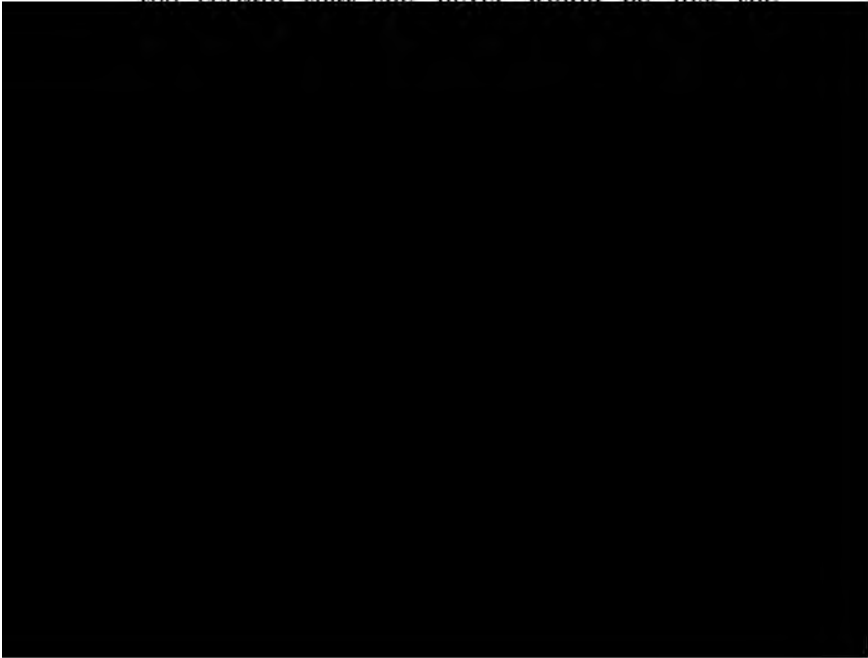


taken care that every one shall not be a poet. We ourselves, previous to endeavouring to sift the real from the imaginary, can but say, paraphrasing Voltaire, *Si un tel amour n'existait pas, il fallait l'inventer*. This must sum up the total of our admiration. We think well of Petrarch for inventing such a passion, for that it did or could have existed we are loth to believe.

This in no way detracts from the charm of Petrarch's poetry. The value of a scientific or artistic production depends not on our acquaintance with and approbation of the private life of him who produced it. Not one tithe the less do we rate Hamlet, because we know so little of the life of Shakspeare; nor is our appreciation of Bacon's works impaired by our cognisance of many unfavourable features in his character. By a parity of reasoning, it matters scarcely anything to us in judging Petrarch's love-songs as love-songs, to know whether, in painting his passion as being of this vehement nature, he imposed upon himself and others; but we profess to write the *examen rigorosum* of his love, not of his stanzas, and as such we find many indications that by dint of lashing himself into a state of enthusiasm, he finished by acting a part, which like many other parts, became natural at last. If it be objected to that no writer can

make us sympathise with emotions which he has not felt, that which we call the poetic inspiration must be a misnomer, for no one will maintain that Shakspeare, or Schiller, or Goethe could have experienced all or half the feelings which they portray in their various characters. Their imagination conjured them up, their inspiration and study of feeling in others did the rest.

Be that as it may, Petrarch came back to Laura promising himself to be thankful for small mercies, to be content with seeing her without asking for more ; but alas ! his grief became more poignant than ever. Consumed by desires which possession alone could appease, and yet too certain that she never would be his, the





pared to a road consisting of two stages : possession being the toll-gate that stands between the two. The vulgar mind rarely, if ever, travels beyond the boundary. Possession once gained, indifference sets in.

“ 'Tis an old lesson ; Time approves it true,
And they who know it best, deplore it most ;
When all is won that all desire to woo,
The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost.”

If possession be withheld, the vulgar traveller returns whence he came, calling oblivion to his aid—

“ Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair ;
If she be not fair to me,
What care I how fair she be ?”

Not so with the refined and elevated mind.
To him love is no mere conquest.

“ *Lass dich, Geliebte, nicht reu'n, dass du mir so schnell dich
ergeben !
Glaub'es, ich denke nicht frech, denke nicht niedrig von dir.*”

He continues the road with more intense, though subdued, enjoyment. If his pace slacken, it is not from weariness, but to admire and appreciate at ease.

What if Possession be refused to him ? Does he turn back, seeking in oblivion a balm for his wounds ? No. His love becomes a life-long sacrifice.

“ *Pur mi consola, che morir per lei
Meglio è che gioir d'altra.*”

He sings with Blake—

“Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.”

“In hell's despair” Petrarch “built himself a heaven.” An unrequited passion does one thing or another for a great man. Either it drives him mad, or it leads him to glory. Madame de Pompadour was right when she said something to this effect. Petrarch turned to fame for consolation. The ardent desire to acquire a European reputation silenced for a time his sorrows. That reputation he obtained. Amongst the heroes of antiquity, Scipio Africanus had most attracted and captivated his



to it. Though his contemporaries reproached him for this, we can well understand Petrarch's defiance of the vulgar tongue of his country. The poem known under the title of *Africa*, and which reckons but few admirers nowadays, became then the principal or rather sole foundation for Petrarch's superiority as a poet. It would be a gratuitous slight to his contemporaries to aver that his Italian effusions obtained no celebrity during Petrarch's lifetime, but these spontaneous creations of his genius were accepted as simple elegant pastimes; no one dreamed of seeing a really serious title to poetic fame in them. Even Petrarch himself, in his Latin works, designates them as mere pretty trifles.

Africa, and that alone, decided Petrarch's crowning, which took place in 1341 at Rome, with a splendour and pomp sufficient to satisfy the most ambitious cravings. The most exacting pride should have been gratified with such homage, nevertheless we may be allowed to doubt whether Petrarch's joy was really complete. If he had wished for fame, and obtained it, it was not for fame's sake itself; it was that Laura should tremble with delight and pride in contemplating the laurel-crown deposited on her lover's brow. Was this hope to be realised? Would fame obtain what had been refused to

love? That this thought presented itself to Petrarch's mind the very moment he climbed the steps of the Capitol to have his name immortalised may be taken for granted. Can the most dazzling glory set a heart at rest agitated by love? We wot not. It may prove a truce to suffering, but to a man, dominated by a vehement passion, the vivats mingled with his name, the tributes of public admiration accorded to his works, are insufficient to efface the memory of the beloved woman. When a woman is dethroned by glory from the heart of her lover, she may complain, be astonished, suffer from humbled pride; she has, indeed, nothing to regret; the heart which thus escapes was not worth keeping. Glory is a dangerous enemy for woman to contend



after his ovation at Rome, Laura seems to have treated him with more kindness. Says Mrs. Dobson, in that naïve and soporific production, which has so long done duty as "*The Life of Petrarch*:" "Perhaps a long absence made her feel more sensibly that she was not indifferent to him ; perhaps, too, his reputation made some impression on her mind." "Perhaps" plays so great a part in the life of man that we are willing to be ruled for the nonce by the lady's supposition. "Petrarch," she goes on to relate, "was one day seated in a public place to which he knew Laura would come, and meditating on his usual subject (?) with his eyes fixed on the ground, when she appeared suddenly before him. As soon as he perceived her, he rose, and making her a low bow, was going to speak. She cast upon him a kind look, returned him the same salutation, and passed along, saying something he did not perfectly hear. These obliging manners filled Petrarch with extreme joy."

The work from which I literally transcribe the above is called *The Life of Petrarch, collected from Mémoires pour la Vie de Petrarch. By Mrs. Dobson.* It bears also the superscription "Sixth Edition," and its year of publication is 1805. I may, therefore, safely conclude that its authoress is dead. Without being in the least malicious or desirous of the death of any one, I

must confess to being glad that Mrs. Dobson is not likely to be among the living. I would not willingly shock the modesty or shatter the illusions of that worthy old dame, and what I am about to write down will, I am afraid, play sad havoc with the character of Laura, whom throughout her pages she holds up to the admiration of the reader as . . . what? I am at a loss for a comparison, for the sternest and most virtuous matrons of biblical, Roman, and modern history appear as Messalinas in juxtaposition with the Countess de Sades. Susanna the immaculate, Lucrece the chaste, Cæsar's wife herself, had she remained, as her husband commanded her, above suspicion—which she did not—nay, the very postals provide no prototype for the



To us the extreme joy seems the result of these words which he did not perfectly hear. We believe that Madame Laura had made an appointment, and in this belief we are strengthened by the burden of some of his sonnets. They point to a period, lasting for a day or so perhaps, in which he conceives the boldest hopes, happiness seems to be within his grasp, but alas! these expectations are deceived, and he complains bitterly. If these complaints are serious, if their accompanying reproaches are not the ebullitions of the poet's whimsical imagination, then our surmise is correct, and Laura has been betrayed into an imprudent promise. What had she promised? Petrarch does not tell us in so many words; but under the veil of his discreet language it becomes easy to guess that he anticipates the realisation of his fondest, though wildest dreams; he counts the hours, and exclaims: "If my blind desire do not mislead me, the moment of her promised pity has arrived." These words indicate clearly enough an assignation which the gentle Laura, moved by second thoughts, does not keep, leaving Petrarch to kick his heels on the pavement, if pavement there was; for he adds: "What cruel wind has killed the seed which was about to sprout and give the longed-for fruit? What obstacle (literally he says, 'wall') has risen between my hand and the

ear?" (blade). If this complaint is not to be taken in a general sense; if, instead of applying to a series of frustrated hopes, it alludes to a day, an hour, in which she promised to take pity on him; if the wall risen between the hand and the ear has not a purely figurative meaning—a supposition which from the tenor of the context we deny—then Laura was what from the beginning I have accused her of being—a coquette, a heartless flirt, whose vanity was flattered, who would have given herself to Petrarch had it suited her purpose to do so.

"Through habit does love enter the mind; through habit it is forgotten. He who will be able to pretend that he is unhurt, will be unhurt. Does she, your mistress, tell you to come



tion from heaven, from mankind, and from every object around, we are well-nigh out of patience with him, we almost forget the admiration he commands as a poet; because we see that, like every one who is extremely miserable, he fancies that he has inspired all Nature with his own affliction.

Contrary again to the precepts of the author of *Ars Amatoria*, who says, — “Let her not congratulate herself so much that she can hold you in contempt; take courage, that to your courage she may yield. And fly not from conversation, nor let your door be closed; and do not in tears hide your countenance in the shade.” Petrarch, in the sulks, flies to the solitude of Vaucluse, which he rarely leaves, save to travel or pay a visit to the woman who still holds him spell-bound.

And so pass five or on for six more years, until Laura dies, a victim to an epidemic which ravages Avignon and its vicinity.

The object of his passion once removed, we should expect Petrarch to have done with her; but scarcely has the first violent grief subsided before he begins to torture himself anew.

“Il desir vive, e la speranza è morta.”

Despite the overwhelming evidence that Laura never loved him; the cruel doubt, whether he had been mistaken continues to prey upon him.

To solve this doubt he invokes every art, every stratagem that a surcharged imagination can devise; tricks that would have made the fortune of the modern spiritualist, if they had not led him to the police courts as a vagrant and impostor. Be it said, however, that to these tricks we owe the most beautiful, the gravest, and, in many opinions, the most perfect sonnets of the poet. Those in which he narrates his interview in heaven with Laura have a ring and style forcibly reminding one of the impassioned earnestness of the prophets. Still, their greatest *raison d'être* seems to be an attempt to "whitewash" Laura in the eyes of the world, proof positive that she wanted condoning in his own eyes for her cruel be-



she continues, with a deep sigh, "was my heart separated from thine, nor will it ever be; but I moderated thy flame with my looks, for there was no other means to save us both. How many times have I said to myself: He loves, he burns; I must avert the danger by showing him my face only, not the innermost of my heart. That is what has often driven thee backward, and checked thee as the rein to a horse that loses itself. A thousand times anger was in my face, while love consumed my heart; but with me desire never vanquished reason. Then when I saw thee conquered by grief, I softly lifted my eyes to thine, thus saving thy life and our honour. These were my arts and wiles with thee; one day a friendly reception, the next a cold one. At times I saw thine eyes so filled with tears that I said to myself, 'he will surely die if I do not come to his aid.' And I came to thy aid without playing false to honour. Often I saw thee so goaded that I said to myself, 'a stronger rein is wanted here.' Thus by turns, glowing and flushed, pale and ice-cold, now sad, then joyous, I have conducted thee hither safe and well, though wearied. The sweet noose thou hadst round thy heart pleased me, and the beauteous name thou madest me with thy words pleased me also. With us the amorous flames were almost equal, at least, when I had

become aware of thine ardour; but one showed, while the other hid them."

No further extracts are necessary to show that Petrarch's passion, if passion it was, cannot be judged by ordinary standards. We can but come to one conclusion. A man of genius generally feels and suffers more intensely than another. If Petrarch's feelings and sufferings were wholly or in part imaginary, his poetic faculty enabled him to describe and bring them home to every reader.

The twenty-six years that elapsed between Laura's death and his own—he was found dead in his library, July the 18th, 1374—were spent in many noble efforts in the interests of his country in particular, and in the alleviation of



find in possession fresh and ever-renewed fuel for their flames. In this respect, it would be difficult, impossible almost, to establish general maxims. We may charitably suppose that if Laura had yielded to her admirer, she would have been loved no less faithfully, nor would the feeling have been of shorter duration ; for, apart from Petrarch's inherent nobility of character, she herself had something more than physical beauty to nourish that flame. When beauty alone awakens love, when youth only inspires the desire, we may easily foresee that love will get wearied, that the desire will be extinguished the day beauty wanes ; but when the heart and the intellect are captivated no less than the eyes and the senses, when the exchange of sentiment and thought, step by step with desire, develops the passion, the woman who yields need not fear the ravages of time. Her eyes may with impunity lose their brilliancy, she is protected against infidelity, against desertion by the very nature of the passion she inspires ; time cannot attack her heart or intellect, which will defend her happiness much better than her beauty. If Laura was really such as Petrarch represents her to us ; if she united all the precious gifts with which he has pleased to adorn her, she might without risk have defied old age and habit of possession.

Would Petrarch have sung his joy as he has

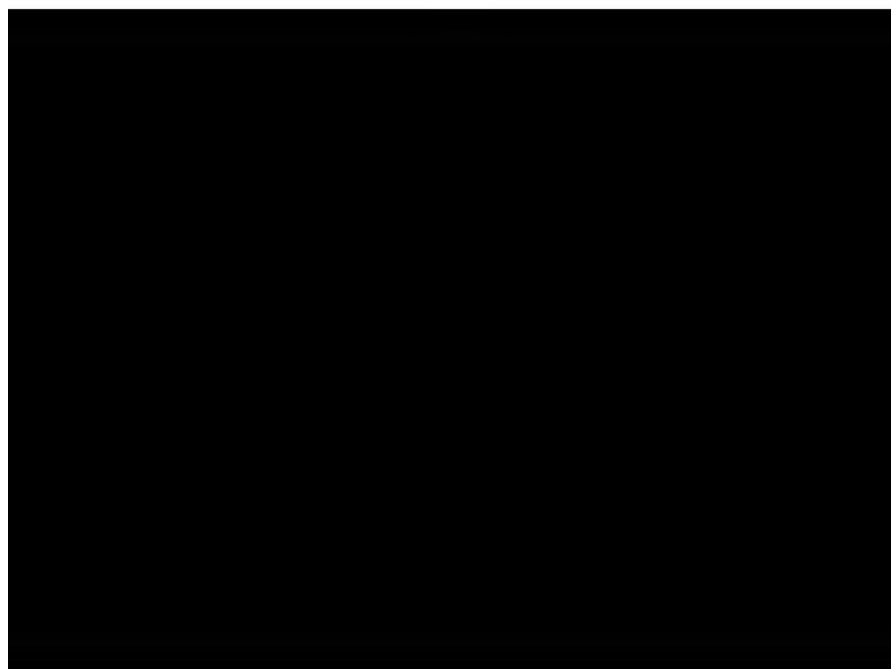
sung his sufferings. From what we know of Petrarch, we may unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative. It has been said somewhere, that "If adversity elevates and tempers anew great souls, it abuses and enervates great minds, unless the heart be on a level with the intellect." Petrarch's heart was to the full as noble as his intellect, and to such grief may be fruitful, but joy inspires them equally with the sublimest eloquence. Gratitude offers the poet as many resources as lament and regret. I am glad to think that Petrarch would have found in happiness a poetic theme of inexhaustible wealth. Nay, more. If he had not been condemned, or condemned himself, to eternal lament, he perhaps would have abstained from all these exclusively

the laurel, have found so many admirers and imitators, that Salvator Rosa, in his satires, complained that he and they

“—— il Sole han consumato.”

All this would have been different, no doubt, if instead of continually uttering prayers which were never to be granted, he could have addressed to the woman he loved hymns of thanks. Contentment gives the mind an instinctive clearness; grief, by upsetting all our faculties, drives us in spite of ourselves to high-flown imagery, to stilted and ambitious metaphors. Still, whatsoever value these conjectures may possess, not Petrarch's love but the *Canzoniere*, as the most perfect monument which human genius has erected to the expression of such love, must be the pedestal whereon the poet should be placed, and whence he should be seen. *L'amour est l'origine, la cause et le but de tout ce qu'il y a de grand, de beau, et de noble*, writes Alphonse Karr. No one has borne greater tribute to this truth than the Italian poet. With him love is the precious metal which he carves and chisels into every fantastic shape and delicious design; but *Materiem superabat opus*. As such the workmanship and the workman should be exalted above the material.







THE LOVE THAT LIVETH.

*DANTE AND BEATRICE.**

“Liebe macht den Himmel
Himmlicher—die Erde
Zu dem Himmelreich.”

SCHILLER.

“Le ciel, entre les cœurs, par un secret pouvoir,
Sème l’intelligence avant que de se voir ;
Il prépare si bien l’amant et la maîtresse,
Que leur âme, au seul nom, s’émeut et s’intéresse :
On s’estime, on se cherche, on s’aime en un moment,
Ce que l’on s’entre-dit persuade aisément ;
Et sans s’inquiéter d’aucunes peurs frivoles,
La foi semble courir au devant des paroles.
La langue en peu de mots en explique beaucoup ;
Les yeux, plus éloquents, font voir tout d’un coup ;
Et de quoi qu’à l’envi, tous les deux nous instruisent,
Le cœur en entend plus que tous les deux n’en disent.”

PIERRE CORNEILLE.

SAYS Michelet: “Society is founded upon the Family-Institution, and the Family-Institution upon Love, hence Love precedes all.”

At the first blush the theory seems sound

* In due chronological order this essay should have preceded that on “Petrarch and Laura;” their positions were reversed, in order that it might form one of a trilogy, a plan afterwards abandoned.

enough. Unfortunately the Family-Institution, even nowadays, differs materially in various countries. It is not the same in the East as in the West. But when the world was younger, though Society was founded upon the Family-Institution, the latter was certainly *not* founded upon Love. For a wise purpose, doubtless, the Creator has implanted in every sentient being an attraction towards the other sex; but it would be folly to maintain that this attraction was at the outset accompanied by the exalting, refining, and softening influences which alone deserve the name of love. Where such love leads to marriage there, and there only, the French philosopher's hypothesis becomes correct.


supposes the influence of the woman on the man, the same as that of the man on the woman; this influence again presupposes a sentiment which created that influence and invested it with a peculiar character; that sentiment is Love.

Love such as this, in which the woman plays an equal *rôle* with the man, in which she is his guide towards everything good and beautiful, did not exist among the ancients. With the exception of one solitary instance—the courtship of Ulysses and Penelope—we meet nowhere with the poetical figure of the sweetheart in their literature. Where the Greeks treat of courtship, as in their idylls, we instinctively feel that it is the aspiration of the poet towards the pure and innocent rather than a picture of the reality. Every now and then a trait is revealed telling us “That those shepherds and shepherdesses who have betaken themselves to the country and put on the garb of rustics, are city ladies and gentlemen.” Instead of the nectar they would have us taste in the kisses of their inamorata, we seem to feel as if we had been saluting a dummy in a hairdresser’s shop. The stickiness of the wax and cosmetics adheres to our lips.

Woman fills too anomalous a position in the first pages of the world’s annals to obtain a lasting influence for good on man. She is revered

and despised at the same time. She is treated as a superior being in one moment, as the most debased in the next. The Hebrew legislator thinks her not worthy to work at the ornaments of the priests for the sanctuary ; she may break her oath, if her father or husband tell her so, it is tantamount to saying that she has no conscience or soul ; yet this same legislator recognises in her a gift the most sublime in human nature, nay, surpassing human nature : the gift of prophecy.

The Greeks went farther still in their contradictions. They disputed in woman what is her very essence—Love. They attributed to woman divine wisdom, and yet Plutarch makes one of




is called Urania ; the other, earthly and popular, who is called Polymnia. The first presides at all pure affections, the second fans into flame the grosser ones."

These words place us in the very heart of the debate. Here we have the personage of the mistress, the beloved woman, showing herself under two different aspects. These two representatives of Venus are the body and the soul ; the woman angel or demon, Love beneficent or Love the temptress, and the struggle between these two divinities here on earth becomes the history of woman, embodied in turns by Urania or Polymnia, by the *sweetheart* or by the *courtesan*.

Memory easily reverts to the admirable hymns of Plato in honour of the celestial Venus. For the first time was shown to men, in the words of Socrates' disciple, the hitherto unknown picture of Love as an educating and moralising agent ; for the first time, patriotism, genius, virtue were presented to the world as the glorious offspring of Love ; and so well did the poet-philosopher animate his own life with the new doctrine, that grateful posterity called this love by his name. No man, before or after him, had the singular felicity of discovering one of the feelings of humanity, and to serve it as sponsor, we might say as a father. Yet, by a strange inconsistency, Plato, after having instituted the

cultus, overlooked or forgot its priestesses; woman was declared unworthy to prostrate herself before the altar of Platonic love, or, at least, to serve it in a sacerdotal capacity; to her were reserved the base and grosser feelings of the terrestrial Venus. Urania was to be worshipped solely by men, only they were her fit subjects. Love existed in Greece, the sweetheart, the beloved woman did not exist, the wife was the courtesan legalized.

At Rome the scene changes, but woman's *rôle* becomes not more elevated. The cultus of the ideal love of Plato disappears, but the worship of the beloved woman as a power for good enters not upon the scene as yet. There is an inter-





sensual, voluptuous, and greedy being, with a piece of marble as beautiful as her face instead of a heart, with a brain and body on fire, with a front brazen and haughty; she is the henchwoman of Venus when that goddess starts on a marauding expedition; she is the *marchande d'amours*, and a cheat at that, though careful not to be cheated, for with her—

“*Gratis est mort, pas d'amour sans payer,
En beaux louis se content les fleurettes.*”

Well knew Tibullus this, though he tried to hoodwink himself once into the contrary belief—

“*Sit mihi paupertas tecum, jucunda Neera;
At sine te, regum munera nulla vollo.*”

The lady thought different, for it appears that she politely told him to go; and then he exclaims, “Oh! not to suffer what I suffer I would consent to be a stone on an icy mountain, a rock incessantly beaten by the raging billows of the ocean. Bitter is the day to me, bitterer still the night; every moment of my life is steeped in gall. Of what use is to me Apollo’s inspiration?” Madame had claimed her *dishonorarium*; *her palm had hollowed itself, in order to hold more money.* “Leave me, Muses, if you are useless to my love. I cultivate you not to sing the revolving of the stars; my verses are meant to gain an easier access to my mistress. Gold is

what I want, and what I must have, even at the price of crime or murder, so that I may not be left to expire before a closed door. I will go and snatch the offerings suspended in the temples of the gods, and commence by that of Venus. The creative power that gave a rapacious woman beauty has made of love an infamous god."

This cry of so-called love is nothing less than a malediction; the hymn is an anathema. Woman's empire shows all-powerful, but cursed. Love like this is a blight. It wanted a new religion, nay, a new world, to teach modern nations to look upon, to imagine, and to recognise, the beloved one as a benefactress, not as an evil genius.

It is Dante who first shows us this divine



passion itself is accounted as a claim if not as a motive for pardon. Henceforth a new feeling springs up in the world generally, but especially in woman's breast—the love of God. This is not blasphemy, but sound truth. The Hebrew woman trembled before Jehovah; her Indian sister hid her face from Vishnu; the Greeks and Romans bowed their heads in fear at Jupiter's thunder-claps, but the Christian woman learned to love Jesus, and through Him, God. Open the pages of the Gospel of St. Luke, and we find woman mixed everywhere with the life and death of Christ. Scarcely has He emerged from His obscurity than she feels in Him what she blindly sought before, a sympathetic and loving counsellor, who knows her foibles, and is ready to lead her, even through them, to a higher destiny. Martha nurses and ministers to Him; Mary lies at His feet and loves Him; while from His lips fall the angelic and profound words, "Mary has chosen the better part, and this part shall not be taken from her." It is a woman who, in the midst of the sermon, cries, with impassioned tenderness, "Blessed be the womb that bore thee, the breast that suckled thee." It is again woman who, after His descent to the tomb, comes to look where He is buried, and prepares aromatic compounds and perfumes to embalm Him. Has He not absolved her adul-

terous sister, raised up Magdalen dissolved in tears, conversed with the Egyptian courtesan? When therefore, on the third day, Mary Magdalen comes to the grave with the Apostles, and they, finding the body has been removed, go their way, she remains. She remains and weeps, bends over the empty space and weeps again. The angels ask the reason of her tears. "I weep because they have taken from me *my Lord*, and I know not where they have laid Him." "*My Lord.*" It is the beginning of woman's moral emancipation; she knows that henceforth, however brutal her husband, He watches over her, for she sorely needs a defender for many centuries to come, even against the fathers of the Church, who fulminate against her, who would



also creates an ideal love, which should be called Dantesque love, the same as we speak of Platonic love.

He gives to the world the *Divine Comedy*, in which he represents a sinner saved by his love; a life of disorder purified by a memory and a regret. Dante had scarcely reached manhood when Beatrice was taken away from this earth. For a long while this chaste and tender recollection sufficed to keep from his soul, tenanted by her image, all evil passion. The ardour of his senses gets the upper hand, however, and leads Alighieri from one dissolute course on to another, but in the midst of the road of life (*nel mezzo cammin del vita*) he feels himself, like St. Augustine, disgusted with this impure existence, and before him rises anew, like a guiding star, the recollection of his first love. Beatrice, who watches him from beyond the skies—who reads his inmost soul, conceives the design of saving him. How? By an idea as charming as profound; by his own poetical genius. Descending from her heavenly home to where the pagans dwell after death, she goes in search of Virgil. Thus she addresses him—

“O courteous shade of Mantua! thou whose fame
Yet lives, and shall live long as nature lasts!
A friend not of my fortune but myself,
On the wide desert in his road has met
Hindrance so great, that he through fear has turn’d.

Now much I dread lest he past help have stray'd,
And I be ris'n too late for his relief,
From what in heaven of him I heard. Speed now,
And by thy eloquent persuasive tongue,
And by all means for his deliverance meet
Assist him. So to me will comfort spring."

Thus Beatrice leaves Virgil, intimating that she thinks it better that *he* should conduct Dante, in order that his sinning soul might be purified by passing through the various circles of hell.

Even in this departure of Beatrice, trusting the Mantuan poet with this guidance instead of undertaking it herself, Dante's love shines forth. He is reluctant, as it were, to make her celestial presence mingle any longer with the guilty troops; when, however, he feels his courage



but in a queenly and austere attitude, speaking as one who

. "Keepeth back
The bitterest saying, to conclude the speech,"

interrogates him.

. . . "What! and hast thou deign'd at last
Approach the mountain? Knewest not, O man!
Thy happiness is here?"

The angels interpose for the guilty one by a touching hymn, but she, with pity pervading her bitterness, interrupts the choir—telling them not to intercede for him; God had created him so pure, "so gifted virtually, that in him all better habits wondrously had thrived." For a long while I sustained him by my looks and youthful eyes, and "led him by their light in upright walking;" but scarcely had "I changed my mortal for immortal" than "he left me, and gave himself to others. . . . Such depth he fell that all device was short of his preserving, save that he should view the children of perdition." Dante not answering, she adds, with increased vehemence, "Say then, if this be true. A charge so grievous needs thine own avowal." On his scarcely audible "yes," and after many more scathing reproaches, their voyage through the remaining circle of purgatory and towards paradise begins, until they arrive before the throne of Christ,

where with a "Thou art redeemed," Beatrice leaves to resume her place in the third circle, when Dante takes a sublime adieu, telling her that henceforth earth has no temptations which can conquer the pure image enshrined in his heart, and by which safeguard he eventually hopes to join her.

Such is the divine model of woman and her influence which Dante posted at the gates of modern civilisation.

The world stood astounded, as might a Comanche or Sioux on beholding for the first time in a mirror the noble proportions of his own figure. For ages it had been possessed of a charm, which, like the lamp in the fairy tale, no one had been able to light but which set burning

nard de Ventadour, "I love so much." Love was transmuted into genius.

"There are men," he exclaims once more, "who, when they meet with a fortunate love adventure, become the prouder and the more savage; I, when God sends me a look from my lady-love, feel all the more tender to those whom I already loved." Love becomes the source of all other affections.

"What prodigies I'd accomplish," cries Guillaume de Saint-Dizier, "if she would but grant me one of the hairs that fall on her cloak; one of the threads that compose her glove!" Love became heroism.

"I was a poor knight," sings Raimbaud de Vaqueiras, "and now I am a rich *seigneur*; we have conquered the kingdom of Thessalonica, but I felt myself much more powerful when I loved and was beloved in return." Love created the ambition for grand and daring deeds, and remained in its pristine vigour when the ambition had vanished.

The empire of the lady-love swayed almost every action in life. Judges of their cavaliers' actions, arbiters of their thoughts, counsellors, woman really seemed the creator of man. The troubadour called his lady *mon seigneur*. The legend of Pygmalion was reversed.

Until now, however, this life, like all other,

had been mortal. To Beatrice it was given to prolong it beyond this sphere eternally. Until now, obstacles difficult to surmount had invested Love with a warm and almost frenzied devotion. Dante's love, non-consummated, exalted his imagination, and led him from the nadir of despair to the zenith of bliss.

* * * * *

"There is not," says Mr. Theodore Martin,* "in literature a more remarkable contribution to the personal history of a great man than the *Vita Nuova* of Dante. It is a chronicle equally minute in analysis, and admirable in expression, of emotions the most profound, a record of real life, to which there is nothing superior in romance." He might have said more. Romance,

history; we turn to it because it touches the inmost chords of our better nature; in it is embodied the essence of all that is humanely good and perfect. Imogen, Desdemona, Juliet, have the power to move us, but they move us in a different way; we are ever conscious that they were but the emanations of the poet's brain, shaped after a more or less beautiful and good reality; but here we have the reality itself, a woman of flesh and blood, kindling and sustaining within a man the ambition of consecrating his genius to her honour, capable of lifting him by the memory of her goodness from the slough of despond in which he had sunk, cheering him through exile, poverty, and desolation.

Of the beautiful love-story itself we know little, and this little less from direct evidence than from inference. That Beatrice existed, and was not merely an allegorical phantom of the poet's fancy, there can be no doubt. Gifted as was Dante with poetical invention, a perusal of his masterpiece will at once lead us to the conclusion that his was rather the invention of comparison than that of creating. There is nothing vague about his figures, they are all taken from history, clothed by his own hands, endowed with attributes—overcharged, perhaps, but founded on facts. Why among all this reality should he have introduced one chimera? This much for

the *Divine Comedy*. But the *Vita Nuova* confirms the theory still more. It is not a novel, either in conception or construction; it is an event in his life, or rather part of it, psychologically treated and most soberly told.

When a boy of nine, Dante meets with Beatrice, a girl of eight, much in the manner in which Boccaccio, some eighty years later, described this meeting. "It was the custom," he says, "in our city for both men and women, when the pleasant time of spring came round, to form social gatherings in their own quarters of the city for the purpose of merry-making. In this way Folco Portinari, a citizen of mark, had, amongst others, collected his neighbours at his house upon the first of May, for pastime and

cident, said of himself,—*Incipit Vita Nuova*. “Behold a god stronger than I, who cometh to triumph over me.” The god stronger than he was Love, coming to him like Shakspeare’s Pity in the guise of a child. From that time forth Beatrice’s image held possession of the boy’s soul—nay, she herself was his soul.

“Never did sculptor’s dream unfold,
A form which marble doth not hold
In its white block,”

sings Michael-Angelo; and to the sculptor who cannot carve—there are many such, greater artists than those that can—the soul stands instead of the marble; he fashions his ideal out of his more plastic inner consciousness. Many will think that a boy of nine could not create an image; in this they are mistaken; the child has greater faculties of conception than the poet; the latter to become such must first of all become a child. Poetic perfection reaches highest in untutored societies; the direct road to the mind is not hedged in and obstructed by the sentinels of fact and learning, who will let no intruder pass save he be clothed in the orthodox uniform.

Be this as it may, Dante fell there and then in love with Beatrice and for ever. His biographers agree in telling us that he did not meet with her again so as to interchange greetings, until nine years afterwards, though he frequently seized the

opportunity of seeing and being seen by the budding girl. We are not told the reason of this estrangement between the two young people. We know from trustworthy sources that "the Alighieri and the Portinari lived not more than fifty yards apart." "Why," asks Mr. Martin, "having met in the first instance, did no communication of any kind pass between Dante and Beatrice for the next nine years? Was it that in these stormy times some sudden alienation between their parents had kept them apart? But for the existence of some such reason it is scarcely credible that Dante should not in so long an interval have found an opportunity of directly declaring his attachment. For it is hard to imagine him as a mere love-sick dreamer, pining,



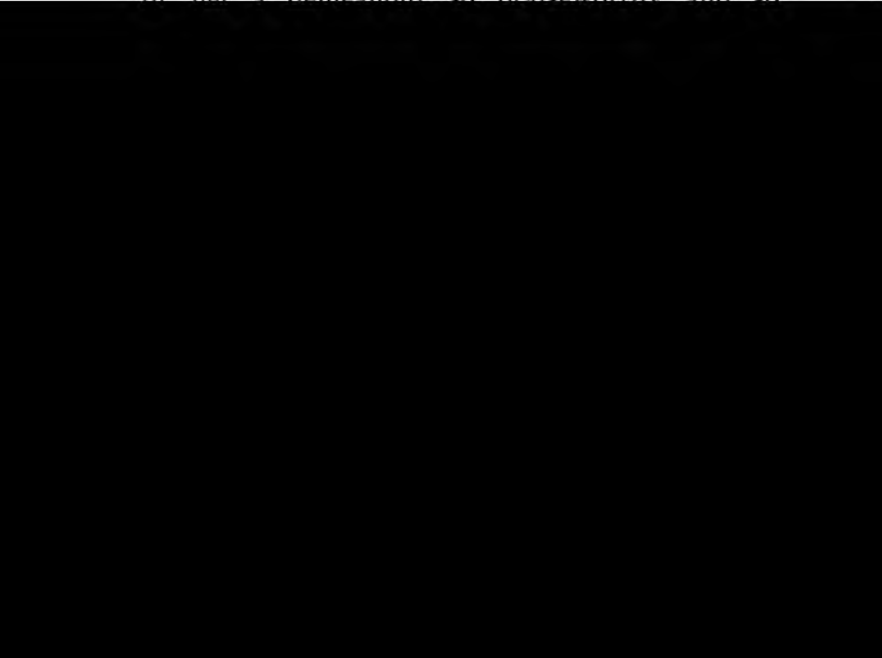
love in its origin and early stages was manifestly no mere Platonism. It was the united devotion of heart, soul, and senses concentrated on one object, and ambitious of obtaining it for their own. It is impossible to read his poems of this period without coming to this conclusion. Tremblingly and reverently, no doubt, he loved Beatrice from first to last, as a noble nature always will love the woman worthy of its regard. But he loved her as a man loves, and with the passion that naturally perseveres to the possession of its mistress.

“Why his love was unsuccessful is a mystery on which Dante throws no light, and as to which no satisfactory explanation has hitherto been suggested. A straitened fortune on his side has most commonly been supposed to have been the cause.”

Thus far Mr. Martin, in his brilliant introductory review. To us, with all respect due to so sterling a linguist and clever an essayist, it seems that Dante's own words have been unintentionally misunderstood by his commentator. Our limited knowledge of Italian—a made-dish of scraps of French and bones of Latin, flavoured by the economic sauce piquante of perseverance, and shaped into a presentable mould of self-instruction—has enabled us to look at the original, and convinced us that the flaw does not lie in

Mr. Martin's translation of the *Vita Nuova*. Nothing could have been more faithfully rendered in spirit as well as letter. At the same time we fancy that we can discern a different meaning in Dante's account of the intervening nine years, during which he is supposed not to have had speech with Beatrice, a meaning strengthened by a late publication.*

"Oftentimes he (Dante's love) enjoined me to obtain a sight of this young angel, wherefore did I during my boyish years frequently go in quest of her, and I beheld in her a demeanour so praiseworthy and so noble. . . ." It is evident that this going "in quest of her" must have been to her house, or else how could he have "beheld in her a demeanour so praiseworthy and so



Young Alighieri had been allowed the run of Portinari's house up to a certain period. But Master Folco was blessed with a wife, descended from one of the noblest families of Florence, who could not have failed to perceive the growing attachment between the young couple, and this, no doubt, led to a suspension of the young poet's visits. Meanwhile Dante, unable to communicate personally with her whom he loved, took, as a mere blind, to writing verses in praise of one of Beatrice's friends, which may have deceived every one but Beatrice herself. Her parents might credit the deception, but she herself understood the import of the lines too well. Leonora, the pretended object of the effusion, was probably a *postillon d'amour* between the young couple, and the fervour of the sonnet at her departure was not inspired by her absence, but because it closed the only channel of communication. "Love's witchcraft is a quick interpreter, and the disguise that hid the true meaning from others did not veil it from Folco's lovely daughter."

Beatrice had seen the verses. Some *good-natured* friend, her own mother probably, had shown them to her, and the maiden led away at first by a jealous suspicion, had passed the young poet in the street without notice. This coolness did not last many days. Says Mr. Roxburghe, after describing Beatrice's doubt as to her lover's

fidelity,—“That evening, at the Ave Maria of San Martino, amid the vesper music, her holy thoughts effaced the earth, its troubles and cares, but afterwards as the folks passed out a steadfast gaze met hers with deference, and was rewarded ; for, spite of being fenced round by duenna and nurse, she ventured a happy smile that fell like blessed balm on the heart of her childhood’s friend.”

This passage seems to explain the following, upon which has been based the supposition of Dante not having spoken to Beatrice for nine years. “When so many days had passed away, after the vision of that most noble lady as made up the exact measure of nine years, on the last of these days she was once more revealed to me.



on that very day also invest it with a tenfold holiness?

As for this love not leading to marriage, we think there is no mystery, though Dante himself may not have been aware of the reason. We have already intimated that Beatrice's mother, a Caponsachi, was not only haughty, but most unlikely to give her daughter to a poor man, and that Dante was poor is sufficiently proved in Fraticelli's biography.

In such a mind as Dante's, highly gifted and therefore more easily impressed by pain or pleasure, love grows with the growth of mind and raises the beloved into an ideal and divinity. Though hidden from the world's eye, it almost became a delirium.

With such a nature as Beatrice's, love must have been of a different kind, earnest and true, but quiet and serene. Without having ever taken herself to task, she knew, and had always known, that Dante loved her, though she had never revealed the knowledge to any one, save to her friend Leonora; if she had, matters might have turned out differently.

It appears that for Dante and Beatrice there came no meeting, not even so brief an opportunity of seeing each other as had occurred at the church of San Martino. At home the mother's ambitious heart was planning for the

daughter ; when abroad the duenna had stricter orders than ever to watch the young girl. She heard of her lover from her brothers, who were often with him, for they were friends, but for the rest there was no intercourse. "Detrimental" was a fact long before the nineteenth century ; mothers had coined it into a reproach for younger sons and dowerless maidens, and though the proud Signora Portinari often quoted Dante as a true patrician, she took care to keep him separated from Beatrice.

For Beatrice, though as yet she knew it not, was betrothed to one Simone dei Bardi, a rich merchant's son, as uninteresting as his own ledgers, and thrice as old as his intended bride. The match had been arranged by the mother,



and traffic, that made a wreck of his young life, and drove him into dark and hopeless misery.

But he was of the oak, not of the willow, and as the storm passed without breaking him, his head reared itself proudly as ever. Disturbances, political and religious, in which rightly or wrongly he was accused of being implicated, were coming apace on his native town. He himself was full of trouble. There had come in his life a turning-point, when, after living as a man among men, he was brought to confess himself little stronger than a child. His love for Beatrice had come to naught; and besides this his life was in danger (being suspected of heresy), should he stay in Florence. His friends urged him to depart, to repair to Bologna, where he would find shelter and safety. Still he lingered, hoping against hope for a glance of Beatrice. On his errands to and fro he would contrive to pass the Portinari dwelling, and look into the Portinari porch with its red lions beside the golden gate-door on the shield. He would peer into every nook and corner, no one was to be seen, nothing but walls and windows, the latter untenanted. His were truly a bleeding heart and a crushed spirit, crushed, yet not broken. Wise counsel, however, prevailed at last, and he left the spot where he had been so happy.

"His remembrance lay
In Egypt with his joy."

The memory of his grief went with him—

"Riding along the beaten way,
Love is not lost to me for aye
I journey, but he haunts me still
And follows, go where'er I will
With bitter sighs, and aching smart
He rules my mind, and rends my heart;
Oh Love! of my sad heart the lord,
Tell her how truly she's adored;
And grant, that, though I ride away
She be not lost to me for aye!"

At Bologna Dante stayed for some considerable time studying, cheered, perhaps, by the recollection of her whom he loved.

"Haply I think of thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising

we may conclude that an understanding was come to between them which in some measure soothed his heart, if it did not satisfy it, by leading him to believe that he held no un-honoured niche in "that temple, her fair mind."

When and where was that understanding arrived at? History scarcely informs us, but Mr. Lothian's work, already alluded to, professes to give the exact time, and though no authority is given for one of its most poetical chapters, the author is throughout so painstaking in all matters of detail that we are inclined to take the unsupported assertion on trust for the nonce. According to him, an interview took place between the lovers shortly before Beatrice's marriage, when "the pent-up heart of the poet swept down the barriers within which it had so long struggled, and—

"Caught up the whole of love, and uttered it,
Then bade adieu for ever"—

if not to Beatrice, yet to all these words which it was no longer meet should be spoken to "the promised wife of another."

This other, the reader knows, was Messere Simone dei Bardi, one of, if not the, wealthiest banker in Florence—no doubt considered "a good match" at that time, as probably he would be regarded nowadays. What an eloquent term is this, "a good match!"—how dearly beloved by

modern parents!—for it means so much. It may signify one thing or the other; as a rule, however, it means an association of two beings for the struggle of supremacy in some accomplishment, in which the weaker goes to the wall. Especially where marriage is concerned, it is susceptible of manifold interpretation. Were Beatrice's feelings and inclinations consulted in this the most important step of her life? We think not. It has taken six thousand years or more of intellectual and moral contest for woman to obtain the right of having a voice in the decision of her own affairs. In the thirteenth century this right was scarcely acknowledged. We also have changed all this, though in a more ingenious way than Sganarelle's. We have

back; however, he was there, and the father at least could judge. The proceeding was capable of further improvement, and mythology shows how it is accomplished with the fifty daughters of Danaüs, who are married twice. The first time they are drawn for as objects in a lottery; the second they are awarded as prizes in a kind of tournament.

Elsewhere beauty disputes with valour for the prize. Among the Semnites, the young man adjudged by public vote to be the handsomest chooses from among the assembled girls her whom he likes best. The next in beauty selects after him, and so on till the girls are disposed of.

Montesquieu, philosophy's clown, who quotes this as a fact, is loud in praise of the custom. The injury to woman is utterly disregarded in view of the advantage accruing to man. "Where could we find a more beautiful institution?" he exclaims, in all earnestness.

Reading his comments, one might fancy himself a Rip Van Winkle, who, having gone to sleep in the nineteenth century, had, by a curious reversal of time, awoke four centuries before our own era, when Herodotus lived and wrote.

Match-making mothers, who like not cleve novelists that whisper heretical doctrines anent their freedom into your daughters

ears by means of brilliant tales, I am not one of them. I am come to assist you in the sale of these daughters' bodies and souls by supplying you with a precedent in justification. Mine is the

"Blest paper-credit ! last and best supply !
That lends corruption higher wings to fly."

When again you are accused of bartering a woman's happiness for gold point to this.

"The most wise of all (their laws) is, in my opinion, that one which is likewise practised among the Veneti, a people of Illyria. In each burgh those who had marriageable daughters brought them every year to a certain place, where a great many men assembled round them. A public crier put them up for auction, and disposed of them all, one after the other. He began

one who would marry her on this condition, and knocking her down to him that gave the promise. Thus the moneys accruing from the sale of the handsome went to marry the ugly and deformed. A father was not allowed to choose a husband for his daughter, and he who had purchased a girl could not take her away before he had given guarantees to marry her. When these securities were found, he conducted her to his home. If the terms could not be agreed upon, the law provided for the return of the money. It was also allowed for the inhabitants of other burghs to come to this sale to buy girls.

"This law, so wisely established, *exists no longer*,* since then they have devised different means to prevent the ill-treatment of their daughters and their removal to other towns. Since Babylon has been taken, and the Babylonians, oppressed by their enemies, have lost all their property—there is not one amongst the people, who, finding himself in reduced circumstances, does not prostitute his daughter for money." (HERODOTUS, *Clio*. cxcvi.)

In Greece, while the father was alive he married his daughter without the latter being able

* With permission of Professor Lankester and others, we intend, next season, to take Herodotus' ghost to Rotten Row, and kindred places of amusement, and especially to the pay-office, St. George's, Hanover Square.

to oppose his will. If, in default of a male child, the paternal inheritance reverted to her, she took the name of *επιχληρος*, attached to the inheritance, dependent on the inheritance. In fact, her fate became indissolubly bound up with the vicissitudes of the succession; every Athenian orphan girl belonged by right to him who would have inherited her father's property, had she not been in existence; she was the property of this relative, and if there were several of the same degree, she was bound to marry the eldest. If married before her father's death, and with his consent—even if a mother—the heir had the right to take her away from her husband and children, and to make her his wife.

One sole exception limited this iniquity. If

might have learned to love, and to whom she had borne children.*

Now and then the young girl's revolt at such tyranny—as Halgerda's in the *Scandinavian Sagas*†—resulted in a bloody tragedy.

Under the feudal régime, or where the Church had full power—as in the case of Beatrice—the oppression became worse. It wanted three consents. The father's, the seignior's, and the king's, or else the ecclesiastical chiefs. In some parts there was something more terrible behind, the *droit du seigneur*, which is no exaggeration or even fable. The facts relating to such have been too clearly established.

This, wanting in many curious details, is a narrative of the past. Let us, before resuming our story, cast a glance at the present.

Two beings are to be united. This union has for principal object the fusion of their hearts and existences; it is an indissoluble partnership, bearing upon every moment of their lives. What would seem to be the first duty of parents in these circumstances? To ask each of these two beings, “do you consent to live united?” Instead of which, what do we find?

Enter a church to witness a wedding, what thought rises uppermost at beholding these

* See the “Law of the Twelve Tables,” and Plautus’ “*Stichus*.”

† “Niels-Saga.” Chapters 9, 10, and following.

two advancing towards the altar? Will they make or mar each other. The Indian law in her poetic phraseology, says: "A drop of salt-water falling into glass of sweet water gives it a savour of salt; a river falling into the ocean, becomes ocean herself; woman in marrying a man, becomes his very image." How far do our modern laws go in seeing that this entire absorption of the woman in man shall be voluntary? Do girls marry nowadays, or are they simply being married.

From outward circumstances alone we shall scarcely be able to determine the question. The girl herself signs the contract, no magistrate or priest will consecrate her union unless she distinctly say "I will" A "No"

facts, and look into the inmost recesses of the heart, and then ask ourselves whether the realisation of marriage is in accordance with the legitimate power the girl should possess over herself.

What should, or does constitute marriage in our times?

We have already said it once. The union of two free beings associating for mutual perfection through love.

This definition supposes the co-operation of two wills ; first and foremost, that of the girl—but as the illusions of youth and passion might lead her astray from the supreme aim of conjugal union, common sense and experience have established above her power, a power relative but sacred, confining itself to the duty of enlightening and watching, a power strong only by virtue of the authority derived from reason, discretion, and tenderness, the power of the parent.

These two powers operate by opposite means and opposite points.

One, that of the girl, considers above all the present ; the other, the parents', looks to the future.

Sympathy fancied or real, repulsion instinctive or imaginary, are the mainsprings of the first.

Vigilance, comparative and modified distrust, acute criticism are the duties of the second.

The one occupies itself chiefly with the

spiritual concomitant of marriage, the fusion of two souls.

The other looks to the material and accessory but important, circumstances, the wealth, the birth, and position of the contracting parties. In short—the girl chooses, the parents consent; or better still, the girl chooses, the parents help her to choose.

The plan thus laid out, which becomes the parents' *rôle*? First of all, to exclude from their homes every man whose character makes him unworthy of their child; secondly, to gather around her, if possible, several men, different in position, but equal in their love for work, by which we all must live, and by the honesty by which we live worthily. After that they must

promptings of her tenderness, and from this mutual confidence there shall be born a resolution, faulty more or less as all human resolutions must be, but deserving heaven's blessings because it shall be based on the love of that which is good, and on the simplicity of the heart.

Sceptics will answer that this is an impossible ideal. A reason the more to try its accomplishment. Man can only attain perfection by constantly placing before himself an ideal; its pursuit, however little successful, will at least lead him into the way of perfectibility.

We can but confess that the world offers us a different picture.

"*I am going to marry my girl,*" is the term employed by most parents, and the term explains the whole affair. Under the pretence that the girl or the young man or both are too young to judge for themselves, they too often substitute their interests and vanity to the interest of their children. The light literature of a country is in many respects her social history. Consult this light literature in England, and you will find that it teems with situations and episodes in which the opposition or tyranny of the parents supplies the chief pivot. One young girl must marry a title, another a million. Each class, egotistically restricting itself within itself, will not allow its sympathies to travel beyond the

narrow circle, and in that circle the choice is determined by petty vanities and absurd pretensions. These classes define love as Bossuet defined the Greek mythology. "Everything in it is a god, except God himself." Everything is love, except love itself. A young girl was lamenting on the breast of her mother the ugliness of her betrothed. "I confess you are right," answered the mother, "but in this union everything is so suitable except your husband." And the mother persisted, and the child yielded, and the world swore that she had consented because she said Yes.

A ridiculous maxim serves as an excuse. "A man is always well enough." For others, perhaps; for his wife, No. "A man has the

“La cause de l’amour,” says Pascal, “est un je ne sais quoi, et les effets en sont incroyables. Ce je ne sais quoi, si peu de chose, qu’on ne saurait le connaître, remue toute la terre, les princes, les armées, le monde entier ; si le nez de Cléopâtre eût été plus court, toute la face du globe aurait changé.”

This, “I know not what.” of the French divine is at once the most powerful and the most powerless something in this world. It changes a Bottom into an Adonis, a Caliban into an Apollo, a Sycorax into a Venus. “No man is great to his *valet de chambre*,” no man is little to the woman who loves him. She prefers him to the gods.

“In the kingdom of Nishadadda ruled a young man of the name of Nala. He was a lion among men. In an adjacent kingdom, under her father’s care, grew up tranquilly, in the midst of a hundred young companions, the beauteous Damayanti. Like a flash of lightning standing out from a pure and cloudless sky she shone among this charming group. Damayanti belonged not to the sacerdotal caste ; a daughter of kings, she sprang from that warlike race which the Brahmins and the law of Menu have succeeded in destroying ; a race whose most sacred prerogatives preserved to the young girl the right of choosing her husband. Meanwhile

Damayanti's companions were for ever lauding Nala's beauty; and Nala found Damayanti's name always on the lips of his associates. Moved by this constant praise he loved the princess. One day hunting in the forest he fell in with a flock of wild swans. Starting at their pursuit he left his suite far behind, and found himself alone at last with one of the silver-winged birds, that said, 'Spare me, O prince, that I may sing thy praises in Damayanti's ears, so that she love none but thee.' The prince held his hand, the bird, taking wing, rejoined its brethren, and with them alighted amidst the young maidens at Damayanti's court. Inciting the princess to its pursuit as it had incited Nala, the swan led her away from the group, then addressed her, 'O



to his court all that the adjacent kingdoms could muster in princes, famed for their beauty and valour, for his daughter to choose from. Among the guests is Nala. At his sight the maiden shudders and fixes for three days hence the solemn moment, when in accordance with the prerogatives of her caste, she shall descend from her throne to place her hand in the hand of him whom she loves. The day comes, but with it a strange event overthrowing the hopes of the lovers. Four demi-gods have become enamoured of Damayanti. To deceive her they assume the features, body, and garb of Nala, and enter with him into the hall, their brows encircled like his with flowers. One would say five celestial brothers. In her turn Damayanti appears, she quickly casts her eyes on the assembled suitors, but, oh, heaven ! five Nalas stand before her, the same dress, the same face illumined by the same expression of tenderness. She recognises the power of the gods and bows the head. How shall she distinguish him whom she loves from amongst the divine rivals who have made themselves like unto him. Then by a sudden inspiration clasping her hands she bursts into tears and prays silently, after which she speaks. 'As I am guilty neither in thought nor action,' she commands, 'I demand in virtue of my innocence that the guardians of the universe shall resume

their celestial forms, so that I may recognise the sovereign of men.' The charm is broken; serene and luminous, their feet speckless from dust, their brows fresh and smooth like marble, and circled with brilliant flowers, appear to all eyes the four inhabitants of Indra's heavenly home. But what metamorphosis is this in young Nala? His crown is withered, his feet are dusty, his brow is moist with sweat; he staggers, and his body is the only one *that throws a shadow*.

"At this sight Damayanti descends from her throne; part of her lover's mantle becomes to her a veil, and lifting from her head the freshly culled wreath, she places it on the tired brow of the young prince, then taking him by the hand, she says to him, 'I am thy spouse.'"^{*}

Qu'étant celle pour qui se fit toute l'affaire,
C'était à elle, non à lui qui le mari dût plaire,
Et qui si son *Simone* fut pour lui si charmant,
Il le put épouser sans nul empêchement."

And thus the wedding took place, the guests, no doubt, flattering themselves that it was all for Beatrice's best, the priest singing a *Te Deum*, as belligerents invoke the blessings of God previous to engaging in battle, for such a union is nothing else, the victory remaining with the most skilful and strong.

What mattered it that the bride was young, the bridegroom old; the one all that was gentle and loving, the other cold, methodical and virtuous of a virtue that thought itself sufficiently complete in itself to dispense with the trouble of being agreeable and amiable. It has been said of Lord Chesterfield that he could kick a man downstairs with more grace than some one else could invite him up. We know many of these people, wicked, but polished and cultured, who, knowing that they have certain faults, are ever endeavouring to redeem them by being indulgent to the faults of others. Messere Simone dei Bardi would have none of these weaknesses; immaculate and without flaw, he was like a smooth, rounded marble column, correct and cold, affording no coign of vantage to vice, having no crevice in which the milk of human kindness might collect. He wanted a wife—why do such men want wives,

except for the reason that boys want birds-nests, to worry their fledgeling inmates—and Folco's daughter did as well as any one else, and so—

“Messire Bon l'a prise en mariage,
Quoiqu'il n'ait plus que quatre cheveux gris :
Mais, comme il est des premiers du pays,
Son bien supplée au défaut de son âge.”

The husband must have known of Dante's love for his wife, for what was no secret to all around, could be no secret to him. We may even suppose that Dante was admitted on a footing of intimacy in his house; we may go further still, and take it for granted that the poet's learning and brilliant attributes were many a time a solace to Beatrice in her dreary home. In our previous essay we have already alluded to such an arrange-

parallel. "The remote worship of a woman throned out of their reach plays a great part in men's lives; but in most cases the worshipper longs for some queenly recognition, some approving sign by which his soul's sovereign may cheer him without descending from her high place." Thus writes George Eliot, and the taint of selfishness, however slight, in man's love is not to be denied. Dante's was the exception. His passion was all-sufficient in itself. It had grown with him. All other sources of life had been absorbed by it; it had become the main-spring of his grief, his joy, his very strength, penetrating his inmost depths, and sowing the seeds of a new being, dead to everything but the rays which the new being himself evolved. In all honesty he might have borrowed the words of the King in Goethe's "Iphigenia," and exclaimed, even to Beatrice herself: "If I love thee, what is that to thee?" His passion in its growth had assailed neither honour nor duty, consequently, they not being offended, could oppose no barrier at which reason and purity of mind might have halted. It "nursed no unlawful aims, no impossible desires." "In yielding to its sway," he writes in the *Vita Nuova*, "I carried with me the full sanction of reason." There was no need to cast out an inner life so noble; the pain it gave was sweeter than ordinary bliss, for it fostered aspirations of which

no one could deprive him, not even Death when it snatched Beatrice from this earth.

For anon came death, a mightier lord, "and took her from his eyes; but her spirit left its radiance with him, and spoke to him through all his tempest-shaken soul in every beautiful and good and noble thought."

"When he shall hear she died. . . .
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination;
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparelled in more precious habit,
More moving delicate and full of life
Into the eye and prospect of his soul
Than when she lived indeed."

Though hope had fled, grief was calm, not harassed by unavailing desire, as Petrarch's, "In that day, in which was completed the first year

great weight in his time, lay interspersed with tokens of a younger life, painting, drawings, art, models, and lutes of many tone and shape, heaped pell-mell with curious things from Pagan lands, the works of Moors, or Syrians and Damascenes.

Some one has just left; Beatrice's brother, Ricovero Portinari, who, after many a fruitless effort, had penetrated to him, the bearer of solace to his silent sorrow, the bearer, perhaps, of a letter from her who was dead to all but him. "And," says Dante, "when the visitor was gone I resumed my task of sketching angels."

* * * *

Man is not born to be all in all to himself only, he belongs by right to the outer world; he is a citizen, a son, a brother; he is to some extent bound to become a husband and a father. As a citizen he fulfils his duty by his share in the government of the commonwealth. As a husband and father he discharges the moral obligations laid upon him by God. That one of Dante's mental calibre could not overlook such facts need not be said. Had everything prospered with him, had his love for Beatrice led to his union with her, had she been preserved, there is little doubt that these obligations would have been discharged in a noble way, but we should not have had the Dante, whose deathless voice

has thrilled the heart of millions for generations and generations. As Mr. Carlyle remarks: "Florence would have had another prosperous Lord Mayor, and the ten centuries," hitherto voiceless, "would have continued voiceless, and the ten other listening centuries (for there will be ten of them and more) had no *Divina Commedia* to hear." For apart from the apocalyptic visions as to his redemption hereafter, contained therein, the *Divine Comedy*, in its three divisions, is an almost exact picture of the poet's life here on earth. Life such as mortals live, with its successions of joys and sorrows, its minor or major concerns and vicissitudes, was finished for Dante when Beatrice married. On her wedding hell may be said to have commenced for him. We are

of his thoughts. He became Prior of Florence, and by the machinations of an opposing party, was afterwards cast unexpectedly forth into banishment, "doomed henceforth to a life of woe and wandering, separated from the woman he had married and the children she had borne him. Of this marriage much has been made by his commentators and biographers, notably by Leigh Hunt, who throughout treats Dante's life-sorrow and love for Beatrice, as one vast subject for good-natured but misplaced satire. We may dismiss the performance of the clever English essayist in a few words. Though fully alive to his brilliant talents, we deem the conception or even the appreciation of such a man as Dante, and such passions as were his, utterly beyond the scope and grasp of a writer who could make himself the apologist of the obscenity of the "Dramatists of the Restoration," and showed a skill, unmistakably the result of sympathy with the task. As well ask Falstaff to understand the jealousy of Othello; as well ask Balzac to conceive the character of Schiller's Don Carlos; as well ask Dumas the younger to create a Juliet or a Thekla. The pen may be mightier than the sword, but sword and pen combined will not penetrate into such a stronghold as that of Dante's mind. One must be content to contemplate it from a distance, or be possessed of a charm like that which

made the outer walls of Jericho fall. Leigh Hunt was not possessed of that charm. He had a trumpet, but was it not the trumpet of the herald at whose stern summons the drawbridge is let down, that he may come face to face with the lord of the fortress. On the threshold of great minds there often stands written, "This is sacred ground, interdicted to the profane." In Dante's case, the profane are nothing less than the masses of humanity. When summoned to surrender the key of their stronghold, the arms with which they conquered, the treasures with which the stronghold is stored, they answer with the Greeks, "Come and take them." There is little doubt that the Persians when baffled, declared that the town was not worth taking, that it differed in no

the poet's brain. We will listen to what he says. "It is only those who have observed little of human nature or of their own hearts, who will think that Dante's marriage with Gemma Donate argues against the depth or sincerity of his first love. Why should he not have sought the solace and support of a generous woman's nature, who, knowing all the truth, was yet content with such affection as he was able to bring to a second love? Nor was that necessarily small. Ardent and affectionate as was his nature, the sympathies of such a woman must have elicited from him a satisfactory response, while at the same time, without prejudice to the wife's claim on this regard, he might entertain his heavenward dream of the departed Beatrice. Is not this the natural course of a strong and healthful nature, reconciling itself to the inevitable—not wasting itself in vain lamentations, but seeking comfort in those human sympathies which are never without their balm when rightly sought? How much better this than the querulous solitude into which Petrarch rushed, to feed upon the morbid vanities of his own heart! And how does the essential difference between the love of the two men show itself in the results? In Petrarch the unnatural fire, fanned by the wings of his imagination, droops and ultimately expires, and in his old age, he blushes for the love-laden

verses of his youth.* In Dante, on the contrary, the flame heightens and expands, shining onwards unto the end with a brighter and broader light; and the concluding pæan of his mighty voice sounds to the glory of her to whom he turned the music of his earliest song."

Of his marriage we know little beyond the fact that he became the father of six or seven children. But the biographers, not content with this, have construed the no-knowledge of details to Dante's disadvantage. Even Mr. Carlyle, usually so fair and discerning, has been betrayed into the error of saying that it was not easy for a woman to make this rigorous, earnest man with his keen excitabilities, happy.

For these assumptions there is no foundation

Was it not better so than to have increased their troubles by following him in his exile? Though he once refused to return to Florence, on the conditions imposed upon him by the authorities, conditions at which the consciousness of his innocence revolted, it may be taken for granted that the hope of such brighter days had not altogether abandoned him; and knowing the depth of love and tenderness that were in his nature, are we to assume that "he did not crave for a reunion with the woman who gave herself to him, in the full knowledge that she was not the bride of his imagination," or that she was not regarded by him with the esteem which her devotion was calculated to inspire?"

During these years of separation he appears to have been attracted by at least one other woman, if not two, but Dante was not a god; he had his strong and ardent passions, and, "like meaner men, to fight the perennial conflict between flesh and spirit." With his proud and earnest nature, sorely tried by men, he was not the one to seek his friends amongst them again. What more natural than that he should have cared for the companionship of the softer sex, probably more willing to sympathise with and to soothe him, for one who, in the enforced absence of his wife, would be the material guide, as Beatrice was the spiritual, on that road from Purgatory to Paradise

which he was now slowly traversing, and which should terminate when the design germinating in his brain was approaching form and shape. This design was his poem. Once that begun, all suffering on earth ceased. He knew that immortality had come within his grasp, that neither Florence nor enemies could take it from him. "Follow thou thy star, and thou shalt not fail of a glorious haven." The writing of it was accompanied by bodily pain; he himself, in speaking of his work, says: "it made him lean for many years." When it was finished and given to the world, the people of Verona, when they saw him pass in the streets, used to say: "See, there goes the man who has been in Hell." It was true, he had been in Hell. He also, like

rains, when the beloved one comes home, to separate no more.

"I know not," writes Mr. Carlyle, "in the world an affection equal to that of Dante. It is a tenderness, a trembling, longing, pitying love, like the wail of Æolian harps, soft, soft ; like a child's young heart ; one likens it to the song of angels ; it is among the purest utterances of affection, perhaps the very purest, that ever came out of a human soul." To this we can add nothing, unless it be the lines of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, illustrative of such a love, regardless of sex :—

" My love involves the love before ;
My love is vaster passion now ;
Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.

* * * *

Far off thou art, yet ever nigh,
I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
I prosper, circled by thy voice
I shall not lose thee, though I die."







HANS MEMLING'S LOVE.

"Eh quoi! toujours clouer une préface
A tous mes chants! La morale me lasse,
Un simple fait conté naïvement,
Ne contenant que la vérité pure,
Narré succinct, sans frivole ornement;
Point trop d'esprit, aucun raffinement;
Voilà de quoi désarmer la censure.
Allons au fait, lecteur, tout rondement,
C'est mon avis. Tableau d'après nature,
S'il est bien fait, n'a besoin de bordure."

VOLTAIRE.

"Es gilt nur ein Glück auf der Erde, das Glück der Liebe,
und wer das versäumt, alles versäumt."—FICHTE.

"Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!"

ROMEO AND JULIET.

I.

A GLORIOUS summer day in the year 1468.
Brüges is *en fête*; the inhabitants have
turned into the streets to welcome the Lady Mar-
garet of York, King Edward the Fourth's sister,
the third bride of their Earl, Charles the Bold,
who this day makes her entry into the capital
of West-Flanders, to celebrate her marriage
festivities, the more solemn part of the ceremony
having been performed on the 2nd of July at
Damme, by the Papal Legate and the Bishop of

Salisbury, assisted by the highest Flemish and Burgundian ecclesiastical dignitaries.

The Bruggenaars, equally ready to revolt and to feast, but rendered more submissive of late, had on this occasion surpassed themselves in their preparations to receive the bridal pair. The picturesque and quaintly gabled buildings, their venerable grey and reddish façades scarcely peeping from behind magnificent tapestry hangings, were smothered beneath flags, festoons, and garlands of freshly culled flowers, hiding the fretworked window-sill and carved postern, and making bright frames to the living groups of noble dames and haughty knights, buxom burgher-matrons and their stalwart consorts. From the Sluice-gate to the market-place the



we pass by the various triumphal arches, flanked by allegorical or pseudo-historical representations of the nuptials of Adam and Eve, blessed by their Creator in a sky-blue coat; the wedding of Cleopatra and Alexander the Great; the marriage-feast of Cana, and many other motley groupings—real and counterfeit. At one, however, we will halt to describe it in the words of the old Flemish chronicler, from whom we have borrowed the materials for this story. “At the top of Bridle Street,” says our gossip, “in the market, close to the Town Hall, the citizens had erected and fabricated such an excellent triumphal structure as struck admiration and astonishment into the breast of every beholder—especially a large and wonderfully counterfeited black lion, grasping in his claw the standard of Flanders, and also an equally large leopard, holding the standard of England, the two fondly caressing each other across the lap of a beauteous maiden, magnificently attired, with a brilliant golden lily on her head, and displaying in front of her a scroll, on which was written : *Leo et pardus in gremio flosculi se amplexi sunt sub lilio*. Behind her were four more lions, one red and three golden, beautifully counterfeited, each waving a standard of silky texture, representing severally the four different dukedoms of Brabant, Luxemburg, Aquitaine, and Normandy .

—belonging partly to the Duke, Charles of Burgundy, the present bridegroom, and partly to King Edward of England, the bride's brother. Also there were on the south and the north sides of the said structure two pretty women, sprucely dressed, holding in their left hands the standards of Flanders and of the city of Bruges, and in their right, the one a gold heart pierced by a dart, the other a crown, both which they were to offer the princely bride Margaret when she should pass to the gay sounding of all the trumpets and clarions, which meanwhile were to be heard braying above the joyous shouts and acclamations of the multitude from the open doors of the Hall."

A midst this noise there stood one living

these parts ; as indeed a stranger he must have been who, amongst the various representatives of almost every nation domiciled in Bruges, could not find one friend, acquaintance, or countryman to do for him what in those days and on such occasions the first religious or secular brotherhood did for its impoverished members, the prince for his nobles, the latter for their retainers, the Church for the mendicant—namely, provide him with a suitable attire, so as not to prove an eyesore to the bright and festive multitude.

Though threadbare in the extreme, the stranger's dress was not that of a villager or artisan, and it made the presence of one—so seemingly friendless and poor—in such a spot the more inexplicable. For he was not there either as belonging to the workmen or as an overseer ; the former, in fact, after the completion of their tasks, had gone home to don their brand-new guild uniforms, and were now distributed through the various parts of the city, to guard their handiwork from the possible mischief of the crowd.

No wonder then that some of the most outspoken among the spectators had already begun to grumble at the privilege accorded to this ragamuffin fellow of taking up his place beside these beautiful and costly lions—a growing disaffection partly checked by the assurance of others that the headmen of the guilds, when

coming to their allotted posts, would soon make an end of the scandal. Our individual, however, was apparently too much engrossed with his own sad thoughts to perceive or to heed the remarks he provoked, or aught that happened near him.

He was still young, despite the sombre tint of his tan-coloured face, the deep furrows on his forehead—sorrow's grand trunk-line—giving him an aged appearance, strangely at variance with the vigorous and upright bearing of his tall and well-formed, though attenuated, figure, and the light brown hair, cut German fashion, low across the front, and descending, with the unmistakable gloss and luxuriance of youth, to the shoulders. Nor was he ill-favoured. The lips, half-opened as if to provide egress for the

creatures. Looking at him, the wonder ceased at his standing there unclaimed by any one, alone among these thousands, with whom he had nothing in common, neither their boisterous gaiety nor their naïve admiration; as if the things they sought concerned him not; as if the clarions and trumpets resounding from the open portals of the Hall had no melody, the flowers in the garlands, the bright paintings of the triumphal arches, no perfume nor colour for him; as if the cooling Rhine wine, copiously flowing from the bill of the counterfeit pelican, the fragrant, ruby hippocras, streaming in jets from the beautiful marble fountains, were not meant to quench his thirst as well as that of others.

Meanwhile the crowd, kept within proper bounds by the archers, grew more animated; the headmen of the different guilds, assembled in the Town Hall, were seen to issue from under the richly carved archway, each repairing to his respective station, and for a moment mingling with the masses, a bright mosaic of multiform shapes and tints. A gaudy, ever-changing scene, resembling the rainbow in its variegated and intertwining hues, though tasteless to the modern eye, perhaps, not so to the mediæval, which saw nothing incongruous or discordant in a green doublet with scarlet sleeves, or in a hose half-yellow and half-blue.

There was as much method in their madness of dressing as there is madness in our method of arraying our men like whitebreasted blackbirds, and our women like graduated zebras; their costumes being designed upon certain principles of art, derived from the customs and precepts of heraldry, and harmonising with the coat of arms of the chieftain or seignior.

To our dreamer though, the scene might have been the desert, the crowd so many animals, for he continued standing perfectly motionless until aroused from his reverie by a hand familiarly laid on his shoulder, and a voice addressing him in a half-bantering tone—"How now, Master Hans, is thy brain being turned by all this splendour?"

drooping flowing veil, not unlike that of the Orientals, the fashion of which had been introduced by Philip of Burgundy, probably in order to protect the bald and benumbed crown from cold.

The headman had to repeat his question. "How now, Master Hans, is thy brain being turned by all this splendour?"

Master Hans started, and retreated a step or two, apparently not too pleased at the uncere-
monious behaviour.

Among the crowd several fingers were already pointed at him. Though the words of the headman had not reached as far, the people concluded that the intruder was about to be dislodged—a mistake, for the intruder replied, gruffly, without the least attempt at moving,—“I have seen nothing so wonderful as yet to turn my brain, Messer Ysembrandt; besides, I—— was not looking.”

“Egad, Messire Peevish, why standest thou here then? Meseems thou mightest have selected a humbler point; if it be not to have thy fill of all this magnificence, it certainly is not to enhance the scene to others by thy presence.”

“Methinks, Messer Ysembrandt, my person is as suitable here as my work.”

“Suitable——suitable, well! I don’t say

may ; but at least thou mightest have donned a more suitable garb on this occasion."

A contemptuous shrug of Master Hans' shoulders was all the reply vouchsafed, scarcely noticed by the other, who continued,—“If thou art not welcome amidst our Bruggenaars, the fault lies much in thy Allemanish manners and thy ugly German gown.”

“I did not come from Germany ; I have lately been in Italy——”

“Thou dost not look like it ; the Italians are at all times costly accoutred, and on high days and festivals they bring clothes from their presses which even our fastidiousness cannot gainsay.”

“The people whom I knew there could not for



why didst not speak? I have set my mind on furthering thy interests, and I could have advanced thee the funds on thy earnings of to-day, or I might have given it thee as a God's pfenning."

"When I want a coat, I can buy one myself," replied Hans, haughtily.

"The first condition to buy is to have money," remonstrated the purse-proud citizen, laughing loudly at his sorry witticism, and scarcely alive to his interlocutor's stare of surprise, who failed to see the cause of the merriment in the other, who resumed—"But thou art right; the work thou has wrought for the Corporation will be richly paid, nor is the Duke likely to be behind-hand, should it meet with his approval; hence there's money in prospective."

"But I tell thee I am not poor, nor did I serve thy fellow-citizens for pay's sake," exclaimed Hans, stamping his foot, impatiently, "but rather for the privilege of standing beside my work, to see the procession, . . . and to be seen," he added, the last words as if to himself.

"With the understanding that thou shouldst keep behind the lions, when the ducal train passes by?"

"*Cerleyn*, no! that's not the intention nor the agreement," spoke Hans, still calm, but with a

calmness that bespoke the most obdurate decision on the contested point.

The headman, on the contrary, already felt his choler rise at the bare thought that such an "out-at-elbows" fellow had conceived the possibility of remaining and showing himself at the weighty and critical moment when the Duke, the princely bride, and the whole brilliant *cortège* of English and Burgundian nobles should pass—nay, as he hoped, might even stop to criticise the decorations more leisurely. No, the thing was too absurd. Would it not be sharing the glory the Corporation wished to accrue from this display with a poor unknown painter, who had no right to claim such a distinction? Once more, it could not be. And to tell the artist his decision

Messer Ysebrandt, as much startled as indignant at the audacious proceeding, was already beckoning his guildmen and archers to come to his aid; the artist's eyes flashed fire—evidently he was not disposed to give in easily. Fortunately he was spared a struggle, if not a quarrel, for before words grew into acts, whilst the contending parties momentarily eyed each other in silent defiance, a loud and shrill jingling of little bells was heard. In another moment, a magnificently but fantastically dressed individual was making his way through the crowd. The tiny silver bells with which his doublet was sown, the fool's cap, the gilded *marotte*, resembling a club, proclaimed the status of the new-comer at once. Populace and guards stepped back at the sight of the distinguishing signs, worn by a handsome and lithe young man; they knew that the personage was no less than the court fool of the Duke. In the twinkling of an eye he was on the raised platform, and throwing his weapon into the air, then, in the exuberance of his joy, dexterously catching it, his arms were round the neck of Master Hans, whilst he shouted loudly, "Welcome home, old friend."

"Coquinet!" murmured Hans, almost stifled by the vigorous embrace; "thou knewest me, then," he added with joyous surprise.

"I should have known thee amongst a

thousand. And thou, wouldst thou have known me? Of course, by my bells," he added, with a smile illumining his frank and beaming features.

"Nay, say rather by thy impetuous and good-natured heart, which does not forget a friend. I did not dream of this . . . if I had, surely . . . I would . . ."

"Truly a great offence against our friendship, Hans, that thou didst not dream of this," remonstrated Coquinet in a gentle tone, looking at the artist and shaking his head.

Hans bowed down his own with a sigh. "I have suffered so much from my fellow-men, that I can scarcely believe in them any longer."

"But thou mightest, at least, believe in

"Thou art right; I myself could not spare the time, therefore tell me where is thy hostel, and I will come to thee as soon as I can slip away. In the meantime, why art thou here?"

"Thou hast asked me what I had done, and why I am here," replied Hans; "both questions can be answered at once; look there!" The last words were accompanied by a gesture of ill-disguised contempt, as he pointed to the painting providing the background to the lions.

"Ho, ho! this can hardly be called progress to a miniature painter," sighed Coquinet, dolefully; "this must have been rather against the grain, poor friend."

"My only way to draw the attention of princes," answered Hans, in a half-ironical, half-apologetic tone. "And yet," he added, after a short pause, "they would wish to deny me my reward."

"Nay, nay, that must be a mistake; the Portery is rich and open-handed, especially on occasions like this; is it not so, Master Ysembrandt?" exclaimed the jester, appealing to the citizen, who at his arrival had discreetly withdrawn a few steps. "Tell me, good Master Ysembrandt, a difference has seemingly arisen between you and my friend?"

"He demands what I cannot accord him. He wants, contrary to all right and fitness, to

remain here to show himself when the Duke with his illustrious suite shall pass."

"Why?" said the jester, with a piercing glance at his friend.

"I had hoped . . . I fancied . . ." stuttered the other, evidently embarrassed.

"That the Duke would notice and perhaps recognise thee, as Coquinet did? Thou overgrown child! And to say after that thou no longer believest in men! On my faith, if thou buildest such extravagant hopes on them, it is not surprising that thou art often disappointed, and thy heart wounded in consequence."

"Say petrified, rather," corrected Hans, shortly. "But meseems I had the right to think that the Duke of Burgundy would have some recol-

requires a certain measure of wise contriving to play the fool with success, and that's the very thing thou lackest ; even if I undertook to assist thee with the Duke, it would be on condition that thou shouldst unconditionally submit to my guidance, and give me the promise to forget the past, as if it had never existed."

Coquinet was right ; it required a wise head to wear the fool's cap, when their wearers were about the only ambassadors of Truth tolerated in the royal presence. Coquinet the Second, *le grand fol de Monseigneur*, was one of those who never shrank from fulfilling his honourable mission. A good heart and a clear head, it was but natural that the sufferings of his friend should interest him ; but aware also of his master's whims, he was careful not to obtrude such sufferings at an inopportune moment. Nor was his an idle boast to further Hans' interest with Charles. The position he occupied was so far from a contemptible one, that Philip the Good had stood sponsor to him, and his influence with the son was so great that most all the courtiers deemed it prudent to be on a good footing with the jester. Amongst the populace Coquinet was beloved, for he was one of them, and many a time he had been their champion, fighting bravely and well to the sound of his bells and rattle.

After the last words, Hans was lost for a moment in deep musing—

“As one, who unresolves
What he hath late resolved, and with new thoughts
Changes his purpose, from his first intent
Removed;”

“Very well,” he said at last, “I will endeavour to do what thou wishest; but tarry not too long with thy help, for thou seest to what necessity has already reduced me.” The artist looked at the coarsely painted screen, which his friend had considered beneath his talents.

“Not necessity, Hans; rather say the spur of ambition that drives, and leaves thee neither rest nor patience; were it not so, thou wouldst scarcely have chosen the most uncertain and adventurous road to thy aim, but have gone peacefully to thy

"Why cannot I follow thee to the Court?"

"Why not say at once to the festive hall? Perhaps thou wouldst preside at the nuptial banquet? Not so, friend, as thou hast taken the fool to be thy guide, thou'lt go prudently and carefully; begin by taking a suitable leave of honest Master Ysembrandt, here present, recommending thyself to his favour and remembrance, then take the nearest and most deserted road home. Where are thy quarters?"

"In the 'Three Kings,' near the Crossgate. But what am I to do in my hostel?"

"Wait, and provide thyself with a suitable attire."

"By Saint Luke, my patron, what delay and needless care! Conduct me to the Duke with a word of commendation, and let the work which he shall give me do the rest. Why is not this gown as good as another?"

"As if I could present thee to the Duke in this dress!" exclaimed Coquinet, bursting into laughter.

Hans remained unmoved, as he resumed,—
"Meseems that the Duke, who loves Art for Art's sake, is likely to seek in the likes of me for something better than silks and velvet, which the first dunce the best might don."

"True, perhaps," was the answer; "but the Duke, who attires all his servants in the most

costly materials—whom the most humble villager never approaches except in his Sunday garb—will scarcely suspect a talented artist beneath the threadbare coat of a vagrant.”

“Thou hast preached self-confidence to a purpose, Coquinet. I perceive that it will depend not so much upon what is in me as what is on me; if this be the case, I had better say good-by to Bruges and Flanders; we do not suit each other.”

“What thou camest to seek here, comrade mine, is not one of the things easily or willingly abandoned.”

“Thou knowest not how true thou speakest,” replied Hans, sighing deeply, and casting a glance to heaven. “May the Lord God forgive

neither; thou art a man, if young, rich in God-given knowledge and talents—a doughty artist, who knoweth that there is a time for all things; who would be chary enough to represent on his canvas the beggar hob-a-nobbing the prince, or to portray the noble parading in a ragged coat the audience-chamber of his sovereign.”

Hans nodded approvingly, and could not refrain from smiling.

“My friend Hans knoweth, therefore, that it is meet to honour princes in a certain way, especially when one wants to crave favours. The question is, will my friend Hans comply with this certain way, yea or nay?”

“Well, yea, then,” said Hans, half-peevisishly; “but thou wilt hurry my introduction to the Duke?”

“I will take the first opportunity to speak of thee.”

“If thou canst not make the opportunity I may have to wait a long while: everything runs contrary with me.”

“Not everything, surely,” remonstrated Coquinet, gently; “or deemest thou our meeting contrary? But I have tarried too long. Thy road is to the left, mine is straight along. And now, farewell. Do as I tell thee, and be patient.” With this the jester, who had meanwhile taken his friend’s arm and conducted him

through the crowd, shook his hand, and in another moment was lost to Hans' sight.

The latter slowly continued his road, which became more lonely and still as he drew nearer to the remote part of the city where he had taken up his quarters. His feelings also grew lonelier, but not more still or light. On the contrary, they seemed to grow more stormy and dark in proportion to the echo of friendship's encouraging voice waxing fainter and fainter; and when it had ceased to reverberate in the "mind's ear," discord took up the lay; the evil concomitant upon his soul's disease, wherewith he had struggled for many years: a foolhardy trust in the unknown, a sad mistrust of the known and visible; an obscured or distorted vision for the good, a too keen eye for the

Coquinet been so anxious to remove him, and thus avoid the recognition? Doubtless Coquinet's feelings for him were above suspicion; but still his friend was a courtier, and as such ever more or less afraid of the displeasure of his master; . . . a new favourite was always an object of jealousy to the others: . . . men are so ambitious and selfish. To obtain for a friend a certain small measure of the Duke's favour, that might be risked; but to place the latter in the possibility of lavishing at once the whole of so costly a gift on another, to the depreciation perhaps of the older follower, that had better be prevented. For he knew men well; he remembered how he had suffered in foreign lands; how envy and ambition, jealousy and false friendships, or the vacillation of his real friends, added to cunning and evil tactics of his enemies, had closed to him the path to fame or fortune, or tripped him up on the first step thereon; how his talent had been denied, his character traduced; how he was depreciated when wanting encouragement, and prevailed upon to do things which proved failures when done. On his genius itself all this bandying to and fro by his fellow-workers had exerted an evil influence, and he felt sure that he might have progressed further in his art if individuality and peace of mind had never forsaken or been driven from him; if he had met

with the appreciation alone capable of landing the artist at his goal. But none of this appreciation had ever fallen to his lot. On the point of making for himself a name in his own country, despite the prevailing glory and influence of the older masters, who stigmatised every deviation from their methods as ignorance and want of taste, an event beyond his control had driven him from Flanders. His soul's desire led him to Germany ; in the venerable schools of her first masters he learned much, and also met with some recognition ; but they, in seeing too much of the Fleming in his works, and especially in his person, withheld him the justice to which he deemed himself entitled. Then he was attracted to Italy ; there he found a new art, also recog-

and love for art; he hoped to gain admittance through the mighty hand of the Duke; he fancied to have employed such good means to draw the prince's attention, and now he had been weak enough to be diverted from his purpose by the first comer, by one who could not in the least understand his aims and aspirations; who saw everything with the eye of a *court fool*—the sensible and good-natured friend was already nothing more than a court fool to the misanthropic dreamer—who had prevailed upon him to slink away, and to hide as might a miscreant or a thief.

Thus, borne on the pinions of a morbid and overwrought imagination, raved inwardly the wretched young man, whose previous history there is no need to sketch. From the present characteristic traits it may be guessed: It is contained in few words. His black-browed melancholy and diseased mind made him a misery to himself and to all around him.

Despite his manifold trials and experience, he would or could not suit himself to the world's ways; he knew mankind only through the fantastic specimens of his own creation, and those were either far better or far worse than the reality. He placed unlimited trust in the Unknown, was ever swayed by the impression of the moment without the patience to await the

justifying of his confidence. In this way he tortured himself the livelong day, growing more sombre and unhinged as each hour passed without bringing tidings of Coquinet, though he might have known that the festivities forbade both the idea of his friend leaving his master's presence and of introducing the topic nearest to Memling's heart. But no, his perverse and mistrustful temper brooked no delay, and consulted nothing but its own impatience, which already inspired him with the ungrateful resolve to leave Bruges early the next morning, without awaiting the results of Coquinet's efforts in his behalf. A resolve, however desperate, always brings in its wake a certain calmness, and our self-martyr slept peacefully that night.

feelings that he openly confessed to him his mind's sufferings and his late suspicions.

The smile overspreading Coquinet's face was tantamount to a wholesale pardon. "I feared as much," he said, "but I forgive thee ; and now I have some good news. The *Vidamesse* de Heurne has a commission for thee."

"Who is the *Vidamesse* de Heurne?" was Hans' natural query.

II.

To supply the answer to Memling's question we must go back to the previous day, and conduct the reader to the festive structure which the Duke had erected for this occasion in the *Hof* at Bruges—an immense hall, surrounded by all those retiring rooms, *garderobes*, and apartments requisite to the proper celebration of mediæval, royal junkettings.

Costly tapestry and draperies of white and blue velvet covered the rough wooden walls and hid the gigantic oaken rafters; the bride, the Dowager-Duchess, the youthful Maria of Burgundy, the Pope's Legate, and other princes of the Church were seated at a board, above which hung a canopy of cloth of gold, stretching to the opposite side, where the bridegroom was throned amidst a group of princely seigniors. The Knights of the Golden

Fleece, and other high-born nobles, with their spouses and daughters, had ranged themselves at the minor tables, extending in two parallel lines from the royal dais to the bottom of the apartment, and loaded with the rarest and most delicious viands in golden and silvern dishes representing ships of every size and shape. Much more could we cull from our old chronicler, who fills some thirty pages with a description of the banquet, but must show to our reader the Vidamesse de Heurne, for whose sake we have brought him here.

Well, cast your eyes to the lower end of the hall, between those two gigantic candelabra in the form of fortresses, from which at a signal of the master of the ceremonies armed knights appear, offering sweetmeats and hippocras to the com-

the sufferer has placed his mind beyond its influence. This appeared to be the case with the noble girl remaining isolated in the midst of the gay throng, an isolation voluntary, no doubt, for to judge from her magnificent attire, her entrancing and almost matchless loveliness, she occupied an exalted rank among these proudest and highest-born in the land. The tables were now removed, and after the circuit of the hall by a pretty child, in the aerial costume of a seraphim, bestriding a live dromedary and distributing all sorts of ingenious nicknacks and bon-bons, the guests were left to mingle at their own pleasure. The more youthful of the courtiers and knights flitted round the ladies, the more sober formed into groups, discussing the lists and jousts promised for the next day, and the Duke himself, of too restless a disposition to stay in one spot longer than was necessary, even at the side of his new bride, had given the signal for a general move, and seemed to be bent upon indemnifying himself for his long enforced rest by an incessant going to and fro, so that his costly dress of black cloth of gold blazing with diamonds was visible as it were in half a dozen places at once. His inseparable attendant was Coquinet, whose simulated eagerness to keep pace with the erratic movements of his master provoked much laughter. But whosoever laughed or chatted, the beautiful Vidamesse continued

motionless and musing, leaning against her column, with downcast head and clasped hands. The jokes, *jongleries*, and tricks of Coquinet and four or five of his colleagues, greatly amusing the company, had left her cold and indifferent, only the removal of the tables was hailed as a pretext to separate from those with whom she had sat down. Having chosen her little nook, she stood there, profoundly unconscious of all her surroundings, and of the remarks her beauty and apparent melancholy provoked. In her dress of crimson cloth of gold, with the wide drooping sleeves lined with azure satin, and set off by a broad loose girdle, wrought with precious stones, and from which dangled the richly worked alms-burse, she looked like a

coiffure rendered it no less stately than in days of yore. The second, a close-fitting sleeve of the dress was made of white *armezyn* (silky corduroy) interwoven with which texture the curious in heraldry might have perceived the lions of Burgundy, but traversed by the bar-sinister denoting bastardy, which in those times brought no dishonour to its wearer. It was not contempt therefore that attracted many a glance towards the Vidamesse, for even at this moment, when her head was bowed down with silent sorrow, she was noticed by two of the most powerful nobles of Charles's Court, Messire Adolf van Cleef, Lord of Ravesteyn, and Messire Antony, the Great Bastard of Burgundy. Their looks lowered as they exchanged a few words, pointing to the musing girl. Just then the Duke approached, and Messire Antony drew his brother's attention to the figure against the column. Suddenly Charles broke through the circle of courtiers which had formed round him, and with a few hasty strides came to her side.

"What makes you so sad and musing this day?" he asked abruptly, the harshness of his tone scarcely concealing its kind intention. The voice startled her. "Messire," she exclaimed—"Monseigneur," she corrected, only then aware of the Interrogator's individuality. "I crave pardon, I did not understand."

"I was inquiring what ailed you, Jehanne?" repeated Charles in a mild tone, unusual with him.

"Illustrious Sir, the reason of my sadness is hardly worth your notice."

"That remains for me to judge, lady-cousine, I wish to know it," he replied, his voice rising with anger. "I require a plain answer to a plain question."

"Monseigneur, it is really too trifling a matter. —I—lost—something." Here she hesitatingly stopped.

"Woman's whims," growled Charles. "I detest such, and you know it, Jehanne. What have you lost? tell me at once!"

"My breviary, Monseigneur! A very costly breviary, most cunningly ornamented with beau-

artists left at my Court to help you to a new beautiful breviary, ornated with excellent miniatures; and even were it not so, it should not be a cause to make you glum on my wedding-day."

"Pray pardon me, my Lord Duke, the loss is irreparable to me, and cannot be replaced by any one or anything," she answered, but this time with an earnestness and eagerness proving that the missing book must have been very dear to inspire her with the courage to gainsay such a prince as Charles the Bold, who, as a rule, did not brook contradiction.

"It should be the gift of a beloved hand to make you grieve thus," interrogated Charles, fixedly looking at her. But she calmly met his piercing glance; no blush tinged her cheeks; they only grew a little paler as she answered—

"From a most dearly beloved one, Monseigneur—from my Lord father, to whom God be merciful!"

"Ah—indeed," commented Charles, in a drawling tone; then, after a minute's pause, "Well, then, fair *cousine*, console yourself; we'll have the book zealously searched for. *Compère* Coquinet, we place the matter in your hands;" and with a cool bow he turned away from her.

Why the simple answer of Jehanne somewhat unpleasantly affected the Duke will be more clear when we inform the reader that the Vida-

messe de Heurne had as good a claim to be called Jehanne of Burgundy as Messire the Great Bastard, and that when Charles addressed her as his *cousine*, he withheld from her a title to which she had a better right—that of sister. Philip of Burgundy was her father, as of Messire Antony, the Duke being the only child of a legitimate union with a princess, the others the fruits of his passions and sin, children of shame and adultery—in one word, bastards; though in those days of corrupted morals the brand of bastardy was not deemed a disgrace by those who bore it; and Messire Antony, who proudly carried his broken scutcheon and his name of Bastard of Burgundy, might have exclaimed with Edmund—

“What bastard shall I be?”

share of his affection, favours, and riches, been provided with rank and station at the Court, in the Army, or the Church. It was scarcely a pleasant thought to Charles that so many should bear his father's name and divide the father's substance who had no legal right to them; but Philip had once for all defined their position, which was similar to that given in later years by Louis XIV. to his natural children—namely, between the high noblesse and the princes of the blood; and Charles the Bold, however egotistic and overbearing, had changed nothing in the situation, and submitted to his sire's will. But, with all his kindness to his natural brothers and sisters, he preferred not to remember their origin, and there were moments when the recollection was especially galling to him. This was best shown in his constant endeavour to make them change their names, the males by high preferment in the Church, the females by marriage. He had succeeded with all save Jehanne, the youngest, who, acknowledged shortly before the old Duke's death, had been brought to the Court, and admitted among the ladies of honour of the present Dowager-Duchess. Disposed at first to dislike rather than love her for her origin, the gentle disposition of Jehanne had irresistibly won upon Charles and his mother, and though the former withheld the sister-title, his heart

went out in brotherly affection to the lovely girl, and, far from wishing to remove her from his Court, he endeavoured to secure her a brilliant position there by an illustrious union. This became not only a source of grief and misery, but caused her many painful and unhappy moments with Charles, and with others no less inclined to arrogate to themselves the disposal of her lot.

For it was Charles, not Philip, who had given the rank and privileges of Vidamesse by transferring to her the ecclesiastical fief granted to him by the Bishop of Ghent. This, however, was a voluntary gift, and it did not prevent him from being stung, in a moment of ill-temper, at her allusion to their closer relationship, though she did not intend it as a sting. Whether to

"Jehanne, Jehanne!" exclaimed the Duke, threateningly. "Messire Antony is sorely displeased with you, and the Lord of Ravesteyn also complains of your conduct. Unless you wish to anger me, see that they are better satisfied for the future."

"For mercy's sake, Monseigneur, hear me before you condemn, for you know not how bitterly they persecute me anent this matter."

"Well, then, speak. I listen."

"But not here," pleaded Jehanne, timidly glancing towards Messire Antony, who had not taken his eyes off her while his brother was addressing her.

Somewhat abruptly Charles took her hand, and led her to one of the adjacent penumbra, arranged embrasure-like round the central hall. For an instant the two mutely faced each other, Coquinet, who had followed his master's footsteps, meanwhile lowering the tapestried *portière*, and disposing himself to stand sentry at the entrance.

With a half-bearish, half-kind look Charles pointed to a seat, but Jehanne, clasping his arm, threw herself at his feet.

"My master and lord," she cried, impassionately, "let this hour be fraught with mercy to me, as it is with happiness to you. Take pity, for I suffer much; their ambition leaves me

neither respite nor solace. . . . Use your power over me for my protection; do not force me to this hymen."

"Egad! Jehanne, you are a foolish and wayward woman to oppose where you should graciously accept.—There is not a noblewoman at my court—nay, in all Flanders—who would refuse to become the daughter-in-law of Messire Adolf van Cleef. At his death his son and heir steps into all his rights. Not to reject such a name and rank would be any girl's duty, but it is especially yours. The dowry requisite has been already provided by me; Messire Adolf has consented; Messire Antony, your nearest parent, wishes it, and *I* will it. Take heed how you obey."

"Alas! Monsieur, I know that I am

"I am not ambitious, gracious Sire, and have no wish for such a mastery. Affinity of soul and mind should, meseems, make happiness of marriage. And reflect upon this, Sire—I have reached my twenty-second year, and Philippe is barely fourteen; he wants a governor, not a spouse.—How should I show him the respect and obedience which a wife owes to her lord and husband?"

Charles looked down at his sister, who was still at his feet, then, with a more gentle motion than was his wont, raising her, he placed his hands affectionately on her shoulders, making her confront him. His natural feelings of honour admitted the justice of her objections to so monstrous a union, and such as policy and ambition alone could have devised. He looked at her with interested approval; he felt himself moved to take her part, but he would do it in his own way.

"There is no need of all this between you and Philippe, at least for some time to come," he said at last; "provided you consent in what I ask, you shall have perfect freedom. It is nothing but a family arrangement, in order to unite two names, and to give you at my court the rank of a married woman. We will stipulate that Philippe must be a knight and have won his spurs before claiming his rights as a husband. Immediately after the union he shall accompany me

on my next campaign. Be sure that I shall not grant him the accolade for nothing; and as I doubt me much of his valour, years may elapse before——”

“Pray pardon me, Monseigneur,” interrupted Jehanne, “I like not this compact. Marriage is a sacrament, illustrious Sir—I know that you yourself regard it as such—and therefore holy. How can I on your wedding-day accept at your hands the promise of a union that binds and unbinds in the same hour—of obedience and faith plighted but not to be fulfilled? It would be desecrating God’s Commandments and the institutions of the Holy Church.”

“You speak well and truly, Jehanne, my well-beloved *cousine*!” exclaimed Charles, moved and

are at an end when the cloister-gates close upon you. She who misses willingly the good that Nature offers, gets the evil instead. I will not consent to this; I wish to keep you at the Court but married and occupying an exalted rank. Take your measures accordingly, and try to make a choice during the eight days of the tournament; meanwhile it were best to caress Messire of Ravesteyn with some hope. I have my motives for this. Bear and forbear, Jehanne, but show me a lively face, and be not dismayed; for henceforth I am your ally, who will not suffer you to be molested."

By this time his anger had vanished. Nodding his head playfully, he gave her his hand, which she kissed, and left her to herself.

"Here, Coquinet," he said to his companion, watching for him at the entrance to the closet, "remain here to give an eye to my lady-cousine, so that she be annoyed by no one at the termination of the feast." Catching sight of Olivier de la Marche, who had joined the jester to await the Duke's commands,

"*Ah ça*, sir Chamberlain, let the torchbearers be called, and the music strike up *plaisauntely*. We are going to lead our lady-bride away."

Jehanne of Burgundy had won a precious victory; she felt encouraged and relieved, but not out of danger; she felt scarcely disposed to

leave the calm retreat, where she could ruminate upon her condition, for the noisy hall, where she should be compelled to show a joyous face, and might be observed and annoyed; so she seated herself on a tapestried settle, but at the same moment Coquinet, in a serio-comic manner, dropped at her feet.

"Most fair, most victorious princess, deign to accept my homage," he exclaimed in a mock-tragic manner. "You have vanquished our Hannibal, and that in the hour when he triumphs over France and England."

"Thou hast played the eavesdropper, Coquinet," spoke Jehanne, alarmed and chagrined.

"I always do that, Princess-cousine, it's part of my profession."

The Vidamesse assented with a sigh.

"They are cunning, powerful, resolute, and unscrupulous. Messire Adolf wants to be united to Burgundy, preferring the right side, but not disdaining the left. Were he a widower he would marry you himself, and would be a more suitable husband than his loutish son, whom I will give a taste of my *marotte* if he again attempts to tease you—or to rob you, as this morning."

The smile that floated on Jehanne's lips at Coquinet's first words suddenly vanished at his last. Her eyes expressed astonishment.

"I do not understand you, Messer Coquinet."

"Nor is it necessary that you should," was the laconic answer. It requires a special knack to understand fools' talk. I know what I mean, that's sufficient. Your guardian, Messire Antony, is a more dangerous adversary than these two; his own elevation is everything to him, and for this your alliance with the mighty Ravesteyn is needed, as was the union of the lady Anne, his sister, with *Heer* Adrian van Borselen, whom she was made to marry sorely against her will. Hence you perceive that these Lords will do as they like with you, unless I interfere," concluded the jester with a self-importance scarcely assumed this time.

"I believe in your goodwill," said Jehanne kindly, "but——"

"Hannibal is your ally," interrupted Coquinet, "consequently I am your ally also, but the better one of the two, as you will find, for think you that he will assist you in bringing back what you have lost?"

"Assuredly not! Know you aught about it?" she exclaimed joyfully.

"Yes, but I will not say a word before you confess to me whether you told the Duke the whole and sole truth just now, and whether there is no one at the Court on whom you look with partial eyes."

"That I should tell my Lord and Duke a falsehood" she remonstrated with noble indigna-

you, in truth, so deeply, simply because it was the gift of the late Lord Duke, to whom God be merciful, or rather because it contains the only relic of your girlhood, a relic which you hold very dear?"

The Vidamesse averted her head, while she hesitatingly lisped "Not for the latter supposition."

"That's fortunate! In that case you will not be hard upon the finder who had the misfortune to tear it inadvertently to pieces."

"Torn to pieces! The only thing that I had left of him," cried Jehanne, no longer mistress of herself, and bursting into tears.

"Console yourself, *Lady-cousine*! I have saved the pieces," exclaimed kind-hearted Coquinet, frightened at the effect of his ruse, "and you shall have your breviary back with everything it contained, only it and the contents will be a little crumpled and bethumbed; but that's not my fault.—Now tell me more, and I will do the same."

"Coquinet, I have trust in your kind heart and faithfulness, but I pray you, do not seek to so unearth a secret which is buried in my heart. There was no need to acquaint the Duke with it, for there could be no question of this young man — besides — I — I — shall never see him again."

Say more she could not, her silent tears choking her utterance.

"Is he dead?"

"I fear me much, he is."

"But you are not certain, so do not lose courage. I do not know how it is," he added, after a short pause, ransacking his brain for some words of consolation, "but cherished friends are never so absent or so distant but what they manage always to come back in fit time."

"Not this one," answered Jehanne, shaking her head; "he was not a sweetheart, but a very dear friend, and is not likely to return and — it is better he should not" she resumed, more firmly and resigned, "for there is too great a gulf between us now. But tell me

her from ever giving him her heart, for he would play with it as he now plays with the book—carelessly and destructive, like a little boy with a clipped bird. Still, I wished to try to save the precious treasure from total ruin, and with a few sallies I induced him to let me have a look at it. Immediately my eye fell upon a little strip of parchment, hidden betwixt the leaves as a kind of marker, very cunningly executed with the pen, and ornamented with a gold and flowered border, as pretty as possible. My sight is very sharp, and being a bit of a clerk, I was enabled to read some secret words, not exactly referring to litanies or gospel. Of course I formed my own opinion, which, equally, of course, I did not communicate to Philippe *Monsieur*, and abstracted it before he was aware. Here it is, fair *cousine*. Now tell me, am I something more to you than the court fool?"

"You are a trusty and chivalrous friend," cried Jehanne eagerly, her eyes glistening with tears as she clasped Coquinet's hands, taking the valued keepsake from it.

Coquinet continued, "I was not so fortunate with the book itself. He did not wish to part with it; he boasted of having purloined it, at the end of the service, when he escorted you at his father's instance. He was quick enough to perceive that you set great store by it, for he

expressed his intention not to restore it, until he had placed the betrothal ring on your finger."

"Now I understand his frequent allusions of this day, as to his power to compel me to say yes. I did not know what to think of them, though I will confess that they made me very uneasy and afraid."

"He'll know better now than to annoy you. You have two allies; Hannibal and Coquinet; the latter, especially, will not desert you. I asked the Jonkheer whether he was in love with you, which he, of course, denied, for I believe that he is more enamoured of a piece of *massepain* than of you; but he confided to me, for we are great friends, that his Lord father and Messire Antony had promised him that he should be

best means to get it, the Duke looked round for me, and I was obliged to remain with him. When I saw you so sad, I more than guessed the cause; but I considered it best to say nothing, for I understood well enough that we had not heard the last of the matter, and that there are threads which ought not to be reeled off too suddenly. I left you to wrangle with our Hannibal, convinced that you would manage him better than any woman."

"Why better?"

"Because you have the good sense not to attack him with the two only weapons the others always employ, and which are of no use soever against him; tears and contradiction. Therefore, you may count from this moment on his special favour and on mine, which goes for more."

"Very modest, Monsieur Coquinet! but will this favour place me in the speedy possession of my book?"

"I will see about it immediately, for if Philippe *Monsieur* leaves the Court with it, I will not answer for anything."

"Be quick about it, then, dear Coquinet; the more as we can remain here no longer. There go the clarions and oboes for the third time; the bride is gone; the revels will commence in noisy earnest. The Dowager-Duchess will

repair to her apartments, she might miss me."

Jehanne rose hurriedly, Coquinet dancing on in front and behind, and not leaving until she was safe amidst the ladies of the Duchess ; after which he went in search of the Jonkheer of Ravesteyn, who was called Philippe *Monsieur*—why, my chronicler does not inform me. He had no great difficulty to make the saucy lad, who was a coward to boot, disgorge his prey. He threatened him with the anger of Charles, who had taken the matter in hand, and would be sure to punish the purloiner severely.

"I frightened him that he would be hanged, quartered, and banished afterwards," reported Coquinet to Jehanne later on, laughing immo-

father and friends; all of which provisos were eagerly subscribed to avoid the terrible fate, hanging, according to Coquinet, over the miscreant's head.

Jehanne at first opposed the idea of intrusting the valued treasure to a strange artist; damaged as it looked, she preferred not to part with it; but Coquinet insisting, she felt she could not refuse, and consented, though but partly believing her humble friend's assertion that the man he meant to employ was such a master in his art that the breviary would gain in value by the restorer's touch.

III.

The reader may remember Memling's question — "Who is the Vidamesse de Heurne?"

Coquinet, instead of answering it in full as I have done, simply told his friend that it was a lady of rank and influence at the Court, who would no doubt use that influence in his behalf if the work entrusted to him turned out satisfactorily, "which," he added, "will not be difficult to thee. Besides, thou wilt be able to judge for thyself, for thou art to see her. I could have brought the breviary with me and told thee what it wanted; but as I knew thy wish to get to the

Court, I deemed this too good an opportunity to be lost."

After which the jester inquired of Memling anent his adventures and wanderings in Germany and Italy since their separation—a topic upon which the artist was reluctant to speak, having to relate more grief than joy. He was conscious that his misfortunes and disappointments were mainly due to himself, and would provoke the justly deserved censure of his worldly-wise and discerning friend, who, in fact, was not sparing in his reproaches, received by Hans with a remarkable patience. Truth to tell, the painter was not listening at all; his mind was elsewhere, for he suddenly interrupted Coquinet's admonitions by a series of questions entirely irrelevant

strangely noticeable in our natures when the assailed take up weapons similar to those used in attack. Memling now sat speechless for a moment. His irritation somewhat abated, he replied—

“What means this surprise? Meseems it is most natural that I should know her; she lived at Damme with an only daughter. Damme, as thou knowest, is not a large place; and besides, my master’s house was in her neighborhood. She liked and was very kind to me, a poor orphan, and cast out by my relations; she treated me as her own child. About the time I left there was talk of a change in her prospects; she expected to remove to Bruges, and gave me to understand that she had hopes of a situation at the Court.”

By this time Coquinet had resumed his ordinary composure.

“In fact,” he now answered, “she was here for some time, but she married, while the old Duke—may the Lord have mercy on his soul—was still alive, the *Sieur de Harley*, who shortly afterwards left with his wife for his distant home.”

“Married to a nobleman, she?” exclaimed Hans in his turn, with some astonishment. “I was aware that she was not altogether poor, but she was, after all, but the widow of a burgher.”

“The widow!—hem!” coughed Coquinet. “Yes, she was that, but she was something more.”

"Something more!" repeated Hans, looking puzzled.

"She was, above all, the handsomest woman in Damme," continued the jester, who, during the conversation about Mistress Kickins, had been making all sorts of grimaces, accompanied by comical facial contortions, as one getting profoundly embarrassed, which latter fact did not prevent him from bestowing, now and then, upon his companion a benevolent smile replete with the consciousness of a superior wisdom and penetration.

"And her daughter? Dost thou know aught of her daughter?" asked Memling, in an earnest and rather anxious tone.

"Yes, a great deal.—But tell me, on what footing wert thou with this daughter?"

renowned artist. The future lay smiling before me. I pictured it as sharing it with her; to live without her was a possibility that never entered my mind; if it had I should have treated it as a nightmare—and yet—” great tears stood in Hans’ blue eyes; “and yet—I was compelled to leave, to do without her!”

The last words were spoken in a voice big with emotion.

“Coquinet, dost thou know what love is?” said Hans suddenly, after a silence which his friend seemed reluctant to break.

“Hm, no, fortunately not,” replied the jester, with a smile. “That kind of thing comes scarcely in my way; and honestly, when I see the mischief it works in others I am disposed to think that I do not lose much by my ignorance.”

“In that case it is of no use me talking to thee about Jehanne.”

“Eh, but thou mayest; I am not quite so dull as thou imaginest. In love experience is not always the best teacher. Its theory gets muddled by practice. The poets compare it to the sunrise of man’s life, perhaps because like the real sunset it varies on each different occasion. It is said that it makes wise men grow foolish; if so, a little bit from hearsay may make a fool grow wise. Just try. Tell me, what did she think of it?”

“She?” exclaimed Hans, brightening; “she

was an angel of goodness and piety. I always knew that her heart was mine, but would not confess my love before I had the right to ask for her hand—before I had taken my place among the Flemish artists ; and—and dost thou perceive now that what it has ever pleased thee to call my ambition—that restless striving for fame and honour from my fellow-men—was in reality not for myself. I loved Art for Art's sake, such recompense as it could give in itself sufficed for me. But I pleaded and strove for her, for Jehanne, who could not marry the unknown disciple of Rogier Van der Weyde ; for Jehanne, whom I could not expose to the cares and privations usually falling to the lot of the poor unprotected painter. Thou knowest how I became an exile from my country

It was a mere 'touch and go' that I was not left out in the cold when he made his peace with Philip," added the jester, not without some bitterness.

"And we think that princes are more generous and noble-minded than ordinary people," mused Hans, half-aloud, while a painful smile played on his lips.

"It's more prudent not to test their virtues with an ordinary measure ; they are like thy picture of yesterday, pleasing at a distance, calculated for public effect, but not to be compared with one of thy miniatures. I wot thou wouldst have been vexed had any one attempted to scrutinize it closely. It is even so with princes. As regards myself I jog along well enough with Hannibal, because I take him as he is, and foster no illusions as to his great qualities, consequently I am never disappointed ; . . . but to return to Celia and Jehanne, why didst thou not tell me of thy love in former days?"

"Because it was still the secret of my own heart which I nursed with sweet hope. Had it been unhappy and unshared I might have wanted a confidant, but now concealment sanctified it the more. I would have deemed it sacrilege to pronounce her name before others ; but dost thou not remember my pilgrimages to Damme, unaccompanied by any one, and which so often pro-

voked thine and our youthful comrades' jokes and innuendoes?"

"Which, truth to tell, thou didst not take in the best spirit," replied Coquinet. "In fact, now that thou speakest of them, I do remember, but who could have guessed that Celia Kickins' daughter was their goal? But let me ask thee something else. How did the mother look upon all this?"

"In the best possible light. When I lived at Damme she treated me as her own child; and when later I paid there frequent visits, I was ever welcome. She often conversed with me about Jehanne, and of her hope of giving her daughter a good dowry. When I grew sad and told her how poor I was, she endeavoured to

that her heart and home were closed to one who had planned evil and rebellion against his sovereign."

"Hem! that's easily understood," muttered Coquinet, with a knowing look, entirely lost upon Memling.

"There is no denying," continued the former, an ironical smile playing round his lips, "that Mistress Celia Kickins always showed herself a most true and, above all, a most obedient subject of her sovereign."

"Which, nathless," interrupted Hans, with a deep sigh, "she would have condoned my youthful folly if I had returned in the nick of time and in a less sorrowful plight, especially now that Charles is her Lord as well as mine. As for Jehanne," he observed, after a short pause, "she never accounted it a crime; she only wept at the thought of not seeing me again; and I will candidly confess, that my eager wish to be introduced to the Court, where I hope to find her, springs above all from an ardent desire to behold her once more, were I to hear the next moment that she is irrevocably lost to me."

"Thou'rt not in earnest about the latter," retorted Coquinet; "but thou shalt have thy wish, because——" Here the jester stopped short. "Are thy nerves pretty strong, friend Hans?" he inquired suddenly.

"I think so; but why dost thou ask?" came the reply.

"Because thy Jehanne is at the Court," answered Coquinet.

"Then my presentiment did not deceive me," exclaimed Memling in a burst of excitement, rising from his seat.

"A nice presentiment that led me to commit such a fool's trick, but the trick of a silly fool," he added sententiously.

"What dost thou mean?" asked Hans impatiently.

"I mean—I mean—that I'll ask the Vidamesse de Heurne to confide her breviary to me. It will be best, all things considered, not to take thee to her: the air of the Court does not

thou sayest; speak, for God's sake; speak, Coquinet, torture me no longer. How does she live then?"

"As the daughter of her father, in wealth and honour. She is called Jehanne of Burgundy, the same as Messire Antony is called the Great Bastard. Charles the Bold addresses her as his well-beloved *cousine*, because he does not openly wish to say, 'my sister,' though he knows well enough that she is such."

Hans had fallen back into his chair; his head dropped on to the table, where it lay in speechless grief, uttering an inarticulate cry now and then.

"Now ask thyself whether thou hast still anything to hope," continued Coquinet, seeing, or rather feeling, the fruitlessness of all attempt at consolation, and determined to eradicate the evil there and then.

"It will be no sin in the eyes of God to love her still," sobbed Hans, at last lifting the tear-bedimmed countenance.

Coquinet shook his head.

"I will and must see her once more," Memling suddenly exclaimed with firmness, his eyes lighted up by a mixture of passion and uncurbed self-will. "I will see her once more," he repeated, "and if thou wilt not be my brother, if thou wilt not help me, then I will help

myself, and clamour so loud and so long at the castle gates, to be taken to the daughter of Celia Kickins, whom they call Jehanne of Burgundy, that my voice will penetrate at last to her ears, and open the door to me, should the Duke himself with his soldiers be waiting behind it to take my life."

"By my soul, he would do as he says," spoke Coquinet, as it were to himself, and watching his friend's movements with a kind of comic air. "No, no, poor boy, before thou resortest to such extremes and deeds of madness, I had better assist thee. Since nought will keep thee from the fierce struggle, prepare and arm thyself for it. The Vidamesse de Heurne, who commands thy presence, is thy Jehanne."



with a smile that disarmed his anger, that his countenance and God's guardianship were all-sufficient for her. Flattering as was the remark, it failed to satisfy Charles; but he had weightier and more personal concerns to attend, so he left Jehanne to herself, redeeming, however, his royal pledge to shield her from the possible coercion of the Ravesteyns. He pointed out to Messire van Cleef the necessity of his son learning more courtly manners and knightly accomplishments before he could be accepted as the consort of the sovereign's relative, also that the lad should win his spurs before a closer alliance, or even the promise thereof, could be entered into. This was in some manner retracting his word, for Charles had already accorded this promise; but the Lord of Ravesteyn dared not hint so much, fearful of annoying the Duke, and altogether upsetting the arrangement by an ill-timed resistance. He therefore submitted, resolving "not to hurry as long as he might hope," and Charles announced his intention of taking the Jonkheer with him on his forthcoming coronation journey as Earl of Holland and Zeeland. Messire Antony submitted also, but from a different motive. His legitimation had lately been talked of, which, once accomplished, would, in the event of the death of the youthful Maria of Burgundy, entitle him to the succession. The

goodwill of his brother was too precious at such a moment to be lightly jeopardised, hence the plans with regard to Jehanne had to be abandoned, seeing that Charles was rather disposed to side with the girl. Thanks to these various circumstances, the Vidamesse de Heurne remained, for the present at least, mistress of herself; but not one amongst these noble seigneurs divined the cause of her callousness to all passion amidst a luxurious and gallant court, where the softer sex was rather proud than otherwise of being surrounded with *poursuivants d'amour*, but where she to all appearance stood alone and fancy free.

We have been let into the secret. Her pure and faithful heart had preserved intact the impressions of a youthful love: the image of the

in the companion of her girlish days, Jehanne recognised him on the instant, but she allowed the recognition to be felt rather than seen by her prudent address, and Memling was resigned that it should be so. He had earnestly and discreetly prepared himself for this interview; the overpowering consciousness of the social gulf now dividing them, the sensible sermon Coquinet had preached to him, counselling prudence, lest he should destroy everything by a rash movement, an impassioned look, nay, the appearance of Jehanne herself in all the lustre of her newly-acquired rank and full bloom of developed beauty, effectually precluded the slightest attempt at a renewal of the old intimacy, and made room for a respectful bashfulness, momentarily shrinking from a closer communion. The maiden now confronting him was so different from the pretty, winsome little Jehanne, skipping towards him as his steps resounded near the maternal dwelling, placing her soft, tiny palm into his and leading him into the garden to admire her domestic pets and floral treasures, that he stood bewildered, the lips refusing utterance to the words wherewith to conceal his thoughts. And with that tender intuition—Nature's special gift to woman—with the detector glance of love, she had guessed the inmost workings of his heart in that hour, understood how long years of suffering

and struggle had broken and embittered this fiery soul, known that a deeply wounded and crushed, but noble being was to be redeemed, that the darkness of despair was to be driven out—a blessed and true woman's task, which she felt had to be commenced at once, and which she accepted without false enthusiasm, but silently, and prepared for every sacrifice and negation of self. With rare skill she had struck a tone removed alike from estrangement that might chill and hurt, as from such familiarity that could lead to the forgetting of their relative positions. She promised him nothing, not even her protection, but he left her with the certainty that he should see her again, and that she concerned herself with his fortunes and his future.

thropy and almost savageness by adversity and the slight of his fellow-creatures, bowed humbly and willingly beneath the yoke imposed by a tender interest; he who had hitherto broken all bonds by which men control men, offered his hands unasked to the silken thread of a woman, submitting patiently, nay gladly, to its restraints. True, the net was woven prudently and with rare skill, not so loose as to leave his movements unrestricted and at his own will, but not so tight as to make him regret and pine for his surrendered freedom. It was no drag, but a support; not a yoke, but a prop. Slowly and by degrees the Vidamesse referred to the past, and only then when she wished to inspire him with trust and resignation, to show that she had forgotten nothing, and make him feel that she was not become a stranger, but another Jehanne. Carefully she avoided everything that could fan the smouldering embers of his passion into flame; zealously she sought out everything that could ennoble the mind, elevate the soul, and sanctify the heart. Her mother's fall, but more so the subsequent worldly advantages reaped from it, had been a salutary beacon to Jehanne to steer clear from the temptations of a Court, still dissolute, notwithstanding Charles's sincere efforts to purify it. In this the pure and unconfessed affection for the absent Hans had been a powerful auxiliary, but with the beloved

one's presence the auxiliary turned traitor to both, and had to be combated with a strength and self-control tenfold more necessary than of yore, for hitherto she struggled against enemies ignorant of the very outworks of her heart; this one, however, was cognisant of the most intricate windings of the inner fortress. The love that had been her defence was her weakness. It had vanquished Hans, making him its vassal, and stood ready to do battle with her. From Memling himself she could expect no aid; the utmost he could do was to be a passive spectator, watching the issue of the strife, ready for anything or everything, as passion, his tyrant, or prudence as personified by his mistress, should dictate.

Having to be her own and Hans' guide besides,

obtained, through Jehanne's silent protection, a place at Charles's Court. Coquinet's advice had been followed. Hans was recommended to Charles without mention being made of his past; the artist, himself, being careful not to obtrude his former services as a claim for present help and favours. Even his family name and origin, if not absolutely concealed, were discreetly kept in the background. But recently returned from Italy and Germany, his manners and appearance stamped him as one whose way of living differed from his present surroundings, while his artistic individuality, profiting by what the great foreign masters had taught him, invested his works with an originality entirely disregarded by the Flemish school of those days; it was, therefore, not difficult to pass him off as a foreigner, and the sobriquet of Jehan d'Allemagne — or in pure Flemish, "Deutsche Hans"—was the only one by which he was known, and accepted for the time being. The cognomen mattered little or nothing. He was neither noble nor knight, whose arms and quarters were to be scrutinised by every herald or king-at-arms, and pronounced flawless previous to his rank and privileges being acknowledged. All this was of no importance to an artist.

That was true enough. His work was his insignia of nobility, the rest was a secondary matter. As for the former, it had as yet not

triumphed over the waywardness of fortune, though it brought him where he so ardently wished to be. Even so, he had attained the height of his desire—been acknowledged and received as an artist at the Court of Charles the Bold, accounted the most generous and art-loving among all Christian sovereigns ; but that was all. The Prince did not single him out for his talent, consequently the courtiers, whose taste was ruled by that of their master, were content to follow his example in that respect. He was one of the painters of the powerful Duke, sharing the privilege with twenty or thirty others, among whom there were some considered his superiors. He was painter to Charles the Bold, the same as that mighty potentate had his carvers and

servants—to be dressed at his expense—provided with fine linen and gorgeous raiment on festive occasions, was eagerly desired and reckoned an honour by all. Hans, therefore, had no reason to be dissatisfied or ashamed; the petty nobility were but too pleased to see their sons admitted to the Prince's household on the same footing; the greater seigneurs accepted with a genuflexion the present of a costly dress from their chief; still, to one whose personal needs were so few, who set so little store by outward appearances, these privileges were slightly valued. More galling to his independent nature was the necessity of conforming to certain rules and restrictions; the inner consciousness of his talents and his ambition revolted at a position which he had imagined so different from the reality. Only great favour with the princely master, extraordinary services, or an acknowledged brilliant genius, could lift him from the mass and obtain that recognition for which he craved. And the work of "German Hans" found no such recognition save from Jehanne, who might protect and recommend him, but who had to be careful in the manner she did this; who would have had sufficient courage to present him to the whole courtier-world as a painter whom she deemed worthy of the greatest appreciation, as the man whom she esteemed and loved above all others,

but who was too prudent to expose Memling, as her favourite, to the hatred, espionage, and intrigue of the powerful and unscrupulous adherents of the Ravesteyns. Besides, though good and noble, she failed to understand the aspirations of Memling, ever craving to excel, who felt cramped and oppressed among the crowd. She imagined him to be satisfied—his future seemed assured, he was freed from the cares of life, and no longer separated from the companion of his youth. She fancied that here, by himself, and without the interference of others, he would gradually win for himself that master-fame which she thought he deserved. She could not reckon with that self-knowledge, that inner consciousness of the artist which told him that he was the

period of his stay at Charles's Court. In Bruges itself he was little known or appreciated. He mostly painted miniatures and portraits for the Court; now and then, when his fancy was left to follow its own bent, he composed more brilliant and detailed scenes from history or Holy Scripture, but people found something unusual in his renderings, which failed to please because they deviated from what was considered hitherto the grand and beautiful in art. The greatest praise these performances obtained from their critics never went beyond—"It is really in the manner of Rogier van der Weyde," or, "It is almost as good as Dirk Stuerbout's," or, "This is something which Van Eyck could scarcely have surpassed." The eulogies were well-meant, but they brought a painful smile to the artist's lips. He imagined to have done *better* than they: he wished above all to be himself, to have his individual manner—he strove for independence, for originality in his art.

V.

In this way five years had elapsed. We are in 1473. Charles was just returned from Germany, where he had paid homage to his liege lord the Emperor for his newly-acquired fiefs, the Earldoms of Zutphen and Gelderland, and where he

had not obtained what he craved for—viz., the royal crown and the consolidation of all his territories into one kingdom—which failure did not exactly put him in the best of humours. We need scarcely mention that during these five years the bellicose Duke had not remained idle in Brüges. On the contrary, this interval in our story had been the most brilliant, hence the least peaceful period of his reign. Each year had brought its fresh campaigns and new conquests. In the former the Jonkheer Philippe van Cleef faithfully accompanied his father and the Duke, and if not contributing much to the latter, he did nothing that could be reckoned as a reproach. His father had as much as possible pushed him to the fore, so that Charles, somewhat against

that she could but pity him and show it. The expression of her sympathy threw him, however, in such uncontrollable fits of angry grief that she felt oft compelled, in order to allay these outbursts, to preach self-control and feign an interest where her heart remained mute. That this situation should be brought to an end she ardently wished, but how to accomplish this wish she knew not. The Duke would never permit her to embitter the Ravesteys by a refusal until she should have chosen from amongst the powerful nobles and knights a champion whose strong arm and influence might serve the sovereign in the furtherance of his ambitious plans. And with the eye on Hans, whose countenance began to show more and more the stamp of "the hope deferred, which maketh the heart sick," she could not resolve to make this choice. She would have had the courage to confess, even to Charles, the cause of what he was pleased to call her vacillation; such confession, however, could be but fatal to the artist, whose removal would be the first and surest result of this imprudent candour. It was scarcely an auspicious moment to find the Duke, who had not spared his own child, favourably disposed to an affection contrary to his wishes and the proud designs he had formed for his relative, who therefore was only too happy that Charles, brooding on his own disappointments, had no

thought or eye for the difficult struggle she was waging. The possibility of a favourable acceptance of such a confession was as much to be thought of as a union with Hans, different from that which now subsisted between them. Meanwhile she withdrew herself as much as possible from the Court circle, and every moment that could be snatched from her attendance on the lately deceased Dowager-Duchess or religious duties was devoted in retirement to art and even to poetry. The romances, sung to her masterly accompaniments on the harp, were of her own composing. Master Hans, the German, instructed her in miniature-painting, and Charles, in his hours of relaxation and good temper, was pleased to listen to the music, calling Jehanne his Christine of Pisa, or

(as Philippe called Jehanne) there was a gentle sympathy and homage, savouring of a familiarity and confidence greater than, according to his notions, ought to subsist between a *Jonkvrouw* of her rank and a *villein*. But he neither dared to hint his suspicions to Jehanne from fear of displeasing her, nor show his resentment to Memling. He flattered himself to be sufficiently courageous to have challenged the latter had he been a knight, but against a *peintre-varlet*, one of the people, who had not even the right to wear a sword, he could only vent his feeling of injury in a way that might be equally disapproved of by the Duke and by the Vidamesse. He therefore contented himself with watching the artist narrowly and adopting a tone towards him which Hans, however meek and peacefully disposed of late, could scarcely bear. Still Jehanne, who had informed him of her difficult position with regard to Philippe, imposed this self-control, and Memling endeavoured to comply by keeping out of the young lord's way, but Philippe *Monsieur* obtruded upon his, and arrogated to himself the right to follow Jehanne when she came to the painter's studio, or else to gain access to her on the pretext of admiring her progress while she took her lessons. This exasperated Hans into fits of his former savage temper, which Jehanne was almost at a loss to

curb. She began to be thoroughly weary of her yoke. In her presence the young men refrained from insult to each other save by look and tone, but Jehanne felt too well that this bridling of their anger was but a temporary truce, and dreaded a fatal outburst. At last, after much cogitation and inward strife, she thought to have found the means of preventing such; the question remained, would Memling avail himself of it? In order to ascertain she repaired at an unusual hour to the studio allotted to him inside the *Hof*, where he was occupied upon a portrait, commanded by the Duke, of the Lady Maria of Burgundy.

We will accompany her thither. We find Master Hans surrounded by a certain luxury, and, though at work, dressed in a sober but taste-

amidst his many and various trials and unobtainable wishes. He suffers, it is true, but he suffers as does the artist, the poet, the philosopher, whether pagan or Christian ; which suffering neither hardens nor embitters his soul, but elevates and ennobles it ; for there is joy mixed with this grief, there is hope and sympathy mixed with his disappointment, for he suffers not alone.

When Jehanne enters he casts an uneasy, inquiring glance at her, which she understands and answers.

"Compose yourself, Hans, my friend, I am accompanied by no one. I wanted to speak to you alone, and have charged Philippe with a commission which, for some hours at least, will keep him away from the *Hof*."

While speaking she seated herself in the high-backed, magnificently carved chair, in which Maria of Burgundy had posed to Memling. Hans, after throwing his bonnet into a corner, took his pallet and brushes to keep a good countenance rather than because he wished to proceed with his work.

"Pray accept my thanks that you bethought yourself of me and came, lady mine!" he says softly, while a gleam of joy lights up his eyes and brings a slight blush to the pale cheek.

"Hans, I always think of you under what cir-

cumstances soever. You may—nay must, rely implicitly upon this, should appearances even testify against me. Will you promise?"

"I will, Jehanne; but still, what mean these preliminaries? Has the change in your condition been decided on?" And the evanescent blush died out of his cheeks, leaving them paler than before, as his glances tried to pierce into her very heart.

"There is no question of me," she replied, smiling reassuringly. "I came to ask if you knew that Master Dirk Stuerbout is about to leave the *Hof* to execute some important work for the Council of Louvain?"

"Yes, I know it. But in what is his absence likely to profit me? He himself is not in my way; only that his work is appreciated above

evoke your envy, Hans ; but solely because it inspired me with an idea I wished to propose to you." Again she ceased, expecting him to question, but he kept silent, looking with an eager wistfulness at her, and shaking his head. Jehanne resumed : " And you yourself ? Do not you wish to work out in the world more than you have done of late ? "

A deep blush rose into his face, his eyes flashed for a minute, but he simply sighed, and continued shaking his head.

" To be *peintre-varlet* of the Lord Duke is no doubt a great honour," she insisted, with a smile that had something sad in it ; " but still, in the future it cannot always be sufficient for you."

" I am content," he said at last, again looking at her with a melancholy tenderness ; " I have learnt to curb my wishes ; that which I proposed myself is unattainable in any case."

" What has been attained by others cannot be so utterly impossible to you."

" Indeed ! That which I proposed is the very thing that has never been attained by others."

" One should not crave after such exalted things ; it only leads to discontent and confusion of the mind. But still, what Dirk Stuerbout accomplished will not be difficult to you, if you wish. . . . I have bethought myself of a

means to get your talents known outside the walls of the *Hof*, and appreciated by others than those who here, first of all, ape the words and opinions of the master, and then ape each other."

"You are thinking of my removal," Hans burst forth suddenly, sharp, and quickly. He had read her inmost thoughts, deftly as she had meant to conceal them.

"Hans! I hoped that you would do me a friend's service," she replied, softly and coaxingly.

"You knew that you would find me ready. What do you require of me?"

"Nothing above your strength, be assured. The bishop's chapel at the Heurne wants repair-

tent the inspirations of your fancy, and accomplish a good work in the eyes of God's saints and Christ our Lord and His blessed Mother, without reckoning the praise and honour that will accrue to you from men."

Hans uttered a deep sigh. "Certes a grand and beautiful work, and a vast prospect you open to me, Mejonkvrouw! Would to St. John, my great namesake, that I were sufficiently strong and talented to accept it; but," he said somewhat wearily, "let us leave this, you know——"

"Hans," interrupted Jehanne, gently placing herself next to the painter, "Hans, you should muster courage, and then the strength will not fail to come. Will not you do this for me?"

"It means separation," answered he, "separation from you, Jehanne," he repeated sadly, after which he kept looking at her, long and wistfully.

She softly shook her head. "I had hoped to find you more strong and resigned, my friend," she said at last, in a half-reproachful tone.

"If it be *necessary* that I should leave the *Hof* I will go," he replied, rather peevishly.

"It is necessary for you," she said impressively; "it is for your peace of mind, for your future, for the certainty that our friendship's bond shall not be torn asunder in a more violent way, that I ask this sacrifice. It is to avoid an

eternal separation that I insist upon a temporary one."

Another pause ensued, broken suddenly by Hans wildly starting from his seat. "Lord of Heaven, why was not I born a noble also?"

"The Lord gave you more than that, Hans; you are richer and more powerful through His gifts, through your great talents, than is the nobleman whom you unjustly envy, through his lineage and the wealth that awaits him."

"And the bride that awaits him, the spouse promised to him? Is that also a gift to be recompensed to me by aught else? Oh! I see your drift, Jehanne," he exclaimed more moderately, noticing that she wished to remonstrate with him. "I sent off to Heurne, it leaves the field free to this

you this cry of rebellion and mistrust, which your soul uttered despite itself, but I continue to rely upon your obedience."

"Jehanne, Jehanne, thou knowest not what I suffer," groaned Hans, falling into the familiar *thou*, wherewith years ago he addressed his heart's idol.

"Maybe, Hans, maybe, and it is better that you should not attempt to make me know it. I also have my share of woe and suffering; you should try to lighten instead of increasing my burden."

"That I may not perish under mine, hear me for once, Jehanne," he cried, deaf to her attempts at reasoning and consolation. "Hear me this once," he insisted.

"No, you must not speak; I may not listen," she answered with firmness.

"Must I go, then—the heart oppressed with a gnawing, crushing unrest, which you could remove?" asked Hans, still kneeling at her feet.

"What I can do for you, my friend, shall not remain undone, so tell me what oppresses you," spoke Jehanne with simple dignity; "only rise. This form of courtesy is superfluous between us; we are . . . brother and sister."

Hans rose with a sigh.

"What torments you thus?" she repeated.

"The thought that in my absence they will com-

pel you to do that which you tell me you are unwilling to do. Oh, Jehanne, Jehanne, so many great and powerful surround you, who will in turns coerce and coax you; will not you have to yield in the end?"

"That I may not yield out of fear and anxiety about you, I wish you to go for some time."

Suddenly Hans burst into a low wail.

"It is true, Jehanne! but too true that I have not even the right to protect you. I should have to look on at it all, and be silent and bow the head. Woe be to me, I am bound, and cannot even die for you; and when danger threatens you, then it becomes wise to stand aside, lest I might forget that I am nothing but a villein and the Duke's slave."

which I would fain prevent with faith and affection."

"From faith and affection I am being banished. Alas! for the bitter fruit of these sweet words," he cried, still disconsolate.

"By our holy Virgin, it is the only one I have a right to grant you, Hans; and if you would be wise and good, you will wish for no other."

"Not even wish, Jehanne?" he repeated, "do not ask for what is more than human, but"—he interrupted himself quickly, lowering his eyes before her sad and reproachful glance—"but I will learn to curb my wishes and be silent. This is the utmost I can accomplish; is it enough?"

"For the present, yes!" she replied; "still, I had hoped to find you more resigned and able to bear. Heaven's hand has brought us together to make each other great and strong; remember this first of all, and promise me that you will go peacefully and contentedly to Heurne, and thank God for the beautiful opportunity He sends you for the free and boundless practise of your art."

"I will think of nothing except your wish, Jehanne, and still go."

"And be consoled; will not you?" she added encouragingly. "Do you know that soon, very soon, you will have a visitor. *Me Vrouwe* de Harley, your old friend Celia Kickins, intends to

pass a few weeks at Heurne, and if the Duke permits, I will come and see my mother when the new campaign is opened, and the Court removes to Brussels or Hesdin."

"You are an angel of goodness and foresight, Jehanne mine," he cried in glad surprise.

"Yes, yours," she replied with firmness. "You may know it, Hans, I have lived and shall live for no one and nothing but for God and for you, but only in such a way as shall be good and necessary for you. And now I must go."

"Is this your farewell?"

"We shall see each other again, but I must go to Monseigneur; he expects me, and this is the only hour I have. Bear in mind that I must contrive that your departure from the *Hof* have not the appearance of a banishment, but

Beatrice of Portugal, his late wife, and chosen a new companion to himself. Can you guess whom?"

"I durst scarcely venture to guess in this instance, Monseigneur," spoke Jehanne, somewhat alarmed, apprehensive that she herself might be the object of the choice. Though considerably older than herself, Messire Adolf was in every way a more suitable partner than his milksop son.

"Therefore do not puzzle yourself, for I will tell you. The Lady Anna, the Sieur Van Borsele's widow, is the bride-elect. You see the Ravesteyns are bent upon an alliance with our blood."

"The Lady Anna will make a great marriage," answered Jehanne, reassured, but somewhat coolly, for this natural daughter of her father was as a stranger to her.

"She does more than that," said Charles; "she will prevent yours."

"Monseigneur!" exclaimed Jehanne, with glad surprise.

"Yes, my child," laughed the Duke. "Philippe, were he a thousand times betrothed to you, cannot well wed the sister of his stepmother. The dispensation of Rome would be required, and that will never be granted; nay, not even asked, for I am against it; hence you will be free."

"And are the lords of Ravesteyn aware of your decision, gracious sir?"

"Not as yet; we will wait with this until the union that separates you from his son shall have been irrevocably accomplished," replied Charles, who was not always strictly upright with those whom political reasons counselled him to hoodwink or to conciliate. Jehanne did not approve of this, but dared not tell him so. She therefore contented herself with expressing her gratitude for his protection, and then led the conversation to the contemplated repairs at Heurne and the proposal to employ Master Hans in the decorating of the chapel. To this Charles gave his consent, placing at her entire disposal the time and services of his master-painter, who, as

"He would think it indiscreet to do so, save through his work."

"Truth to tell, others are not quite so considerate; they torment me sorely with their pretensions."

"The more reason to grant him, out of royal generousness, what others force from your Highness as it were. I am certain that Monseigneur has not even cast a glance at the counterfeit of Mejonkvrouw, Maria of Burgundy, which is nearly finished."

Charles confessed that he had not yet seen the portrait. Jehanne pointed out to him how hard this neglect must appear to the artist, and thus with gentle, earnest, and cheerful gossip prevailed upon the Duke to pay a visit to Memling there and then. Conversing meanwhile, she endeavoured to remove certain prejudices which Charles still nursed against the painter; and in this way half reluctantly, though well prepared, Charles allowed himself to be led away, accompanied only by Coquinet and holding Jehanne by the hand. The latter would have gladly called together the whole Court to witness Hans' triumph! And a strange triumph indeed met her eyes when Coquinet, in joyous eagerness, had thrown open the door of Memling's studio to give ingress to the Duke. Hans, sword in hand, was pursuing Philippe *Monsieur*, who, in the

first moments intent upon a violent defence, made his weapon describe circles as one possessed; but soon convinced of the superiority and skill of his opponent, retreated, pale and trembling, into a corner of the apartment, where at last, mad with fear, and with shaking knees leaning against the wall to keep upright, his powerless hand dropping his weapon, he uttered some incoherent sounds resembling a prayer for quarter and his life.

At the sight of this scene, an unexpected triumph certainly, Jehanne felt her blood grow cold, and stood as nailed to the floor; she wished to, but could not, prevent the struggle and inform Hans of the Duke's presence, which he did not notice, the voice died in her throat, and Charles

middle of the room, but instead of relieving the young nobleman he called upon him to take courage and defend himself, adding that it would be lifelong disgrace to be beaten by a villein. All this was said in a tone, however, which betrayed his displeasure at the defence rather than the attack. But the young knight lacked all the heroic feeling to recover from his defeat, even under the very eye of his liege lord; he could only invoke the latter's interference.

"In the name of the Saints, Monseigneur, come to my aid, this madman wants to murder me."

"You lie, coward!" exclaimed Hans; "each time that your life hung on the point of my sword I have spared it; but now you shall give me satisfaction, and in the hearing of those that are here crave my pardon for your insults."

"I give no satisfaction to a villein," cried Philippe proudly, and glad of a pretext wherewith to hide his cowardice.

"By St. Andrew, Jehanne, this coward is no husband for you," spoke Charles, still laughing to her, until she, reassured by the way in which he took the affair, regained her composure, and entered the apartment also, while the Duke, going up to Hans, addressed him in a light, bantering tone.

"*Ah ça*, Master Hans, what made you so bold

to challenge one of my nobles, and to attack him?"

"His offence and my honour," replied Hans, bowing the knee, and throwing away his weapon when he saw the Duke before him.

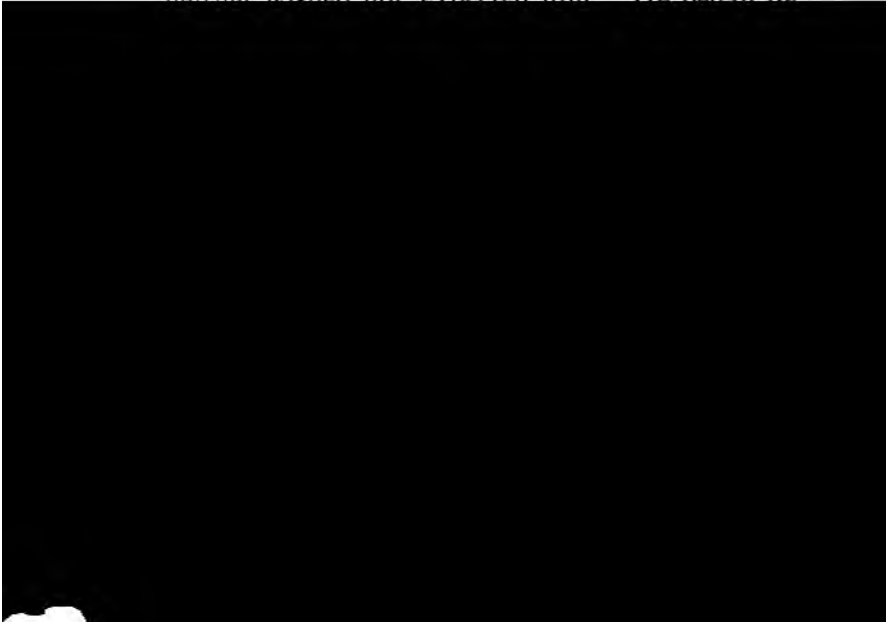
"Honour! a villain!" sneered Philippe from his place of safety.

"Silence, Jonker, that is something beyond your ken for the future," commanded Charles, harshly.

"Besides, Monseigneur, the Jonker was the assailant," resumed Hans.

"The assailant, he? That is very improbable."

"Judge for yourself, my Lord! The Jonker came into my workroom at an hour in which I neither wished nor expected him. He began by



"And did this rouse your ire to this degree?" interrogated Charles, looking so piercingly at Hans that he blushed and bent his head still lower. "But rise and show us this counterfeit. I will see whether, as you say, it is like."

"Monseigneur has had the kindness even to come hither to examine your picture," spoke Jehanne, in order to silently admonish Hans to appreciate the interest shown to him. The painter at this moment, but partly intent on his art and still full of bellicose excitement, pointed mechanically, and without thanking the Duke, to the easel, whereon stood the canvas, simply saying—

"Judge for yourself, Lord Duke!"

Charles, an amateur and patron of arts and artists, rather than a profound *connoisseur*, placed himself in front of the picture, but unfortunately in a light ill-adapted to display the individual beauties of the work; and, at the first superficial examination, began to laugh and to shake his head, exclaiming—

"*Ma-fi!* Is this meant for my daughter—this pale, shy little doll? Faith, I did not think that *Cousin* Philippe was so fair a judge in art. The *Jonkvrouw* looks as if she were crying."

"This bantering criticism was, without intention on Charles's part, a most flattering eulogy.

Maria of Burgundy was in those days ill at heart and sombrely disposed, and fell into sad and melancholy musings under the enforced idleness of sitting for her portrait. The painter had, with perfect accuracy, rendered the expression; but Charles knew his daughter best from the moments wherein she had taught herself to appear with a fictitious smile to please him.

Hans grew pale at the mocking tones of the Duke, and bit his lips to prevent himself from answering.

"My daughter looks better than this," continued Charles. "Could not you have represented her somewhat more blooming?"

"With the greatest ease, Monseigneur, if I had wished to lie and flatter with my brush even

room of my master painter," he said to him, in sneering tones of pity; "and in so noble a cause, and by so illustrious a hand."

"My gracious Lord may joke if it please him," replied Philippe, his eyes filled with tears of vexation and shame; "but it is certes the first time that your Highness passes over the insult of a nobleman by such a mean personage. He has broken your edicts and insulted your house in your very presence. Shall this remain unpunished also because your Highness thinks fit to make light of my personal grievances?"

"The latter, *Cousin*, I think more of than you do yourself; for it grieves me to the soul that a knight, the son of one of my foremost nobles, should have allowed himself to be ignominiously defeated by a villein; and with regard to the other, why think you that I have such intention?"

"Then I may be allowed to remind you, Monseigneur," remarked Philippe eagerly, "that this offence is punishable with death."

Jehanne could not suppress a cry of terror.

"Calm yourself, *Mejonkvrouw*," cried Coquinet aloud, in order that the Duke might hear him; "it would be little like Hannibal to hang a man who has shown his courage in order to please a milksop!"

"There is a way of showing one's courage

which is tantamount to rebellion, and which should be repressed with the utmost severity, if a prince wish to remain master in his own house," spoke the Duke, sombrely looking down to the ground.

"Poor Monsieur Philippe," exclaimed Coquinet in a tone of mock pity, and suddenly bounding towards the young noble, "then we'll have to go in mourning for you ; for in any case you are the first instigator, and I, who like a fool have ever zealously studied the edicts and ordinances made by the wise, read plainly in them that the first instigator shall be accounted the most culpable."

Silence, *Coquin*, wait with thy quips and farces until we ask for them," thundered Charles, with

in my own workroom; he no doubt forgot that I had but to stretch out my hand to be provided with a sword."

"A light jest about this unfortunate portrait ought not to have roused your choler like that."

"It was more than a light jest, Monseigneur," replied Hans. His jesting with what he was incapable of judging I should have despised and overlooked, but he also insulted me personally; he was the first to lift his weapon against me."

"Monseigneur, he lies; I did not draw my sword the first; I only chastised him with the flat of it for some impertinent remarks," cried the Jonker triumphantly.

"I was bound to resent that, was I not, Monseigneur?" burst out Hans, the crimson of anger and indignation flushing into his face.

"If thou had been noble, I say not *nay*, but a man of thy condition should not have so much pride, at least should not show it towards a superior," said the Duke, assuming the familiar *thou*, which, in his case, was an almost sure sign of a friendly feeling to the addressed.

"Hans is of your house, illustrious Sir. He deems himself your servant, and as such he might not brook any humiliation whatever," interrupted Jehanne apologetically.

"Egad, Vidamesse! let him speak; he is well

able to plead his cause without your intercession," barked Charles.

"I am the superior of this one there," resumed Hans proudly, pointing to Philippe. "The gift God granted me I hold in high honour, and seek to cultivate; he dishonours and degrades the nobility he inherited from his ancestors."

This was scarcely an auspicious epoch for the ventilation of a theory for the rights and equality of mankind, least of all for its practical application; still there was something of boldness and pride in Hans' demeanour and bearing as he spoke the words which appealed to Charles's inner man, and found an echo in his own heart leaning to the chivalric; nevertheless he endeavoured to conceal the impression by answering—

how to flatter, bowed to Charles, who seemed to read his meaning, and whose features displayed a passing smile.

"On the honour of my knighthood, thou art bold enough to do it, and so dexterous that it would be a pleasure to measure one's-self with thee," muttered the Duke to himself, but this encomium did not seem to change aught in his intended severity, for in another moment he said loudly to Coquinet, "*Coquin*, command hither my Captain Provost with some of his myrmidons, that they may seize Master Hans, yclept the German, and flog him as is customary."

Coquinet heard the command and bowed in sign of obedience, but remained stockstill as if glued to the ground. The Duke did not appear to notice it. Jehanne, who in common with Coquinet, had sufficiently long studied Charles's features to determine with any amount of certainty his humour therefrom, preserved the same absolute outward immobility, though inwardly a prey to the most conflicting and heartrending emotions.

Hans turned deadly pale, but spoke with a strange calmness and dignity.

"Monseigneur, you are surely not in earnest in this; I am no vagabond or miscreant. You have said so yourself. I have committed the

offence of a freedman against a noble ; punish me as such, but not as a serf, not as a slave, for I shall not bear it."

"Thou shalt bear what I command thee ; thou art my vassal, my servant ; nothing else or more, however proud and rebellious thou mayst be. I show thee mercy, for thou hast committed thyself against my noble, against the son of my friend, and thou deservest worse."

"I require no such mercy ; I prefer death to degradation."

"It is not for thee to choose ; thou shalt accept what I will !" said Charles coldly, and with commanding gesture.

"By heaven I shall not !" yelled Hans in wild despair ; and with tiger-like nimbleness, picking

it was the lion at bay—the last throw of the despairing gambler who stakes his life against disgrace. But for one moment he held up his weapon, then he lowered it, and falling at the Duke's feet, with bowed head and clasped hands, he spoke slowly and scarcely audible.

"I have raised my hand against my Lord and Sovereign; now have I deserved death; let justice be done to me!"

"It shall be done to thee, thou mayst be certain," replied Charles in a tone in which the keen listener might have detected something ambiguous.

By this time Jehanne had succeeded in mastering her emotions, and to tear herself from Coquinet's grasp.

"Monseigneur," she cried, sinking down also beside Hans, "do not listen to him! he is mad; he knows not what he craves. Be merciful to him for my sake, for he is my friend, my brother from our childhood; for many years he has been dear to me; do not strike me in him . . ." And as if to shield him, she covered his head with her hands.

The noble courage of the girl, avowing a love so long pent up in her inmost heart at the very moment when disgrace and misery threatened the cherished one, could not fail to evoke admiration and sympathy in every generous breast; but

Charles seemed to close his against such impressions, for he spoke coldly and with severity—

“How is this, Jehanne? do you plead for a rebel who lifts his hand against your sovereign and kinsman?”

“I am convinced, Monseigneur, that he is ready at any hour to give his life for his Lord and master, and the guilty trespass of this one moment springs not from the heart, but from the brain unhinged and terror-stricken.”

“I know well enough whence it springs,” replied Charles. “I know him better than you imagine; he has been an audacious rebel from his youth. He knows what I mean. Dost

it all. Pick up this sword and give it to me."

Somewhat surprised, Hans hastened to obey.

"How camest thou by this weapon?" asked the Duke, curiously examining the damascened blade.

Hans remained silent and hesitated; he remembered Coquinet's advice.

"Out with it; we command thee," said Charles, in a tone that left no choice.

"The Earl of Charolois gave it me years ago, when times were different—when I had some hopes of his favour," stammered Hans, his eyes filling with tears, and scarcely able to suppress a choking sensation rising in throat.

"The Earl of Charolois was a great sinner in those times," interrupted Charles; "and the Duke of Burgundy has felt even this day in your mad onslaught the after-pangs of his crimes. But where the Earl of Charolois was to blame, the Duke of Burgundy will not judge thee too rigorously. My late father—may the Lord have mercy on his soul!—forgave me also." At these last words Charles reverently lifted his bonnet, and spoke almost inaudibly, as if communing with himself, while deep emotion was visible in his features. "The Duke of Burgundy," he continued aloud, and forcibly, "gives thee back this weapon, on condition that thou shalt no

longer use it *against* thy master, but *for* him."

"Heavenly Saints! I—I do not understand," exclaimed Hans confusedly.

"I do," chimed in Jehanne joyously. "Kiss your Duke's hand, for mercy has been granted to you," and she herself set the example of this humble gratitude.

"My gracious Lord, could I but die for you now," spoke Hans, with enthusiastic transport.

"Hm! the opportunity might possibly be found," remarked Coquinet, silent all this while, but now indulging in facial contortions, which plainly showed that the *dénoûment* pleased him but moderately. At the sound of his voice the

this time," replied Charles, laughing in spite of himself. "Conduct the Jonker of Ravesteyn to his noble father, and communicate to him in our name what *prouesses* he has accomplished here"

"Illustrious Sir!" remonstrated Philippe, in a bitter tone of reproach, "the Vidamesse de Heurne is the cause of it all; without her I should not have come hither."

"Jonker, Jonker, how can you say this?" said Jehanne, a feeling of vexation at the mean subterfuge making her lose sight for the moment of her own dignity; "how can you say this, when I charged you to go to Damme on an errand for me? Why did not you go?"

Philippe was about to answer, when prevented by Charles.

"Silence!" commanded he, "and be careful not to come within my presence for some time."

Philippe bowed the head and turned away, casting a look of deadly hatred on Jehanne, which look did not remain unnoticed by the Duke, for no sooner had the door closed behind him and Coquinet than he resumed;

"And now, Vidamesse, you are free, but a prey to the ill-will and persecutions of the Ravesteys; why did not you choose a husband as I permitted you to do?"

"Monseigneur, I have chosen this one," she said timidly, taking Hans' hand, and with your gracious permission no one else shall be my spouse."

"Nay, nay, Vidamesse de Heurne! such was not my intention. When I left you the free choice from among the young people at my Court, I had no thought but of a knight or a noble."

"It need cost your Highness but a word to make a knight and noble of Hans Memmelinck,* who is an able artist, and a pious, courageous man to boot, who carries nobility in his heart," said Jehanne coaxingly.

"Nay, Jehanne, by St. Andrew's cross I do not understand things in that way. Were he a



high a Court servant. The man"—and Charles turned to Hans—"whom I reward with the hand of my *cousine*, the Vidamesse de Heurne, must have fought at my side and have earned the knightly accolade in all honour on the field of battle."

"Monseigneur," asked Hans with eagerness, "may I apply this decision to myself?"

"I said it for this purpose, Hans! I know thou hast the feelings of a nobleman and the heart of a warrior; I tried thee sorely just now, and found thee all I could wish. I can no longer bear thee sitting here with this brush betwixt the fingers to paint counterfeits that please no one; I have master-painters and colourists to spare at my Court, but men of stout hearts and valour are never too many in the army. It was not without intention that I gave thee back thy sword; I will place thee in a suitable rank among my men-of-arms; I will pave the way for thee to obtain my *cousine*, but I swear it is the only one. The question remains whether thou canst and wilt go that way?"

"I will, Monseigneur, and, with the help of God, I can also!" exclaimed Hans in a firm tone of voice, though not without casting a melancholy glance at his uncompleted work from which he was so ruthlessly torn away.

"Your noble *cousine* has done so much

for me, she has been so long my support, my solace, my sole hope in this life that it would be base ingratitude to reject the only means that can bring me to her. To abandon my art wrings my heart, Monseigneur! but to renounce Jehanne would be death in the midst of life. You think well that I should accept, Jehanne?"

"Alas, alas, my friend! You must; I know you cannot act differently; but howsoever grateful for your decision, I fear me, Lord Duke, that for the sake of gaining a valiant warrior you are about to destroy a glorious and beautiful artist's career."

"Now, now, Jehanne, it boots little to bewail this decision. I have opened to Hans the shortest



it. One thing is certain. Hans did not marry the Vidamesse de Heurne; he died a bachelor. Shortly after the scene described above, Charles the Bold, too much engrossed with the ambitious plans we heard him enunciate, to consider the wrong he inflicted upon Hans by interrupting his more peaceful but no less glorious career, made the latter accompany him in his campaigns, thinking that he opened to his former favourite a surer way to fame than the one originally chosen by the artist.

And Jehanne? Even before her brother started on his wars of conquest, she obtained his permission to retire to Heurne, where she passed several years in expectation of the return of Memling, sufficiently advanced in rank to enable him to redeem his plighted troth. But he never came. Borne away by the excitement of the rash and sanguinary wars of the fearless, but restless and warlike Prince—dragged down at last in the latter's ignominious and terrible fall, Hans Memling's name was not as much as mentioned at the court in Bruges after the Duke's death. Had he been killed or carried to foreign lands among the many prisoners of war? Had he escaped, and was he wandering as an exile on the face of the earth? No one knew. Coquinet, who might have given information, had never returned.

The Vidamesse gave up all hope of ever seeing her beloved again in this world. A now, dreading the powerful revenge and persecution of the Ravesteyns, especially since Mess Adolf van Cleef had assumed the reins of government in Maria's name, she sought and found a peaceful asylum in a convent. She had abandoned all earthly hopes; there remained nothing but a preparation for a higher life; the times were particularly propitious to such a step, and she thought that she could not do better than take the veil.

Hans eventually returned, though the particulars of this return have not come down to us. Happily his work is there to show that he was not lost to the art which he illustrated, and

facts of the subject are universally known. That such was not the case in this instance we have no need to state. The moral of the tale is left to the reader's inference. That Charles loved Jehanne there is no reason to doubt, nay, it is certain that he loved her better than any other member of his family. Was he, then, apart from this single affection, a monster? In no way; he was simply a feudal brother, claiming the right to do as he liked with his sister, to set up the fictitious barriers which aristocratic prejudice, even until our own days has maintained against love's pretensions. Neither law nor morals opposed the union of a king's daughter or sister with a painter, but the refusal of Charles will be better understood when we remember that even a century later Thévet, in his biographies of the illustrious, excused himself with humble apology for naming an artist amongst them.







LOVED BENEATH HIM.

RAPHAEL.

"Love in itself, for instance, is as every one knows who has felt it, the coarsest and most foolish of all things and feelings. Leave it free to do what it pleases, and we soon cease to care what it does. But Christianity, with a miraculous ingenuity, has confined and cramped it into so grotesque and painful a posture, and set such vigilant guardians to keep it there, that any return to its natural freedom is a rapture, an adventure and a triumph which none but the wisest and most skilful can encompass with grace or safety, and which wise men therefore think worth compassing."—*The New Republic of Faith, Culture, and Philosophy.*

"La civilisation a fait de l'amour une science et un combat."

PRÉVOT-PARADOL.

THE reader is by this time aware that behind every question of a great man's love, there lurks a question of social and moral progress, or the reverse, of which that great man becomes the almost involuntary exponent, when in its results and attendant circumstances his passion differs from that of his contemporaries. Abailard's love story was a more powerful protest against the celibacy enforced by the Church than a thousand volumes of controversies could have been. Petrarch's apotheosis of Laura would not

have existed but for Dante's deification of Beatrice, and, in her, of all that is pure and noble in womanhood, but which hitherto had been neglected and trampled upon by men. To narrate, therefore, such a love story, without taking count of and describing to a certain extent the period in which it was enacted, and the contemporary influence by which it was produced, would be like the showman with his magic lantern, in which he had forgotten to put a light. His audience heard him enumerate and explain the passing figures, but they could not judge for themselves. This contemporary influence, however, while it does not lessen the responsibility of the individual if he yield, certainly increases it if he oppose that influence for good or evil,

as from the animal nature—in other words, man should curb but not mortify it.

The most powerful of the seductions of sense is the sexual instinct ; for which reason, perhaps, “sensuousness is frequently understood only as that which is connected with this impulse in man.”

The ancients, we need hardly tell the reader, allowed a latitude for this impulse, which Christianity modified, then disowned altogether, then modified again. The ingenuousness with which antiquity judged and treated it, and claimed for it the right of unbridled existence and activity cannot hide from us the licentiousness underlying these claims. The most monstrous of forms and usages were called into aid by the ancient religions, especially those of Asia Minor, to give this tendency a semblance of sacredness. It was invested with an idealistic coating partaking of the demon spirit rather than of fairy grace. The Greeks, though no less obscene, knew, at least during their best age, how to restrain it within the forms of the humanly beautiful, though even

“Then did Pleasure’s lawless throng,
Oft rushing forth in loose attire,
The virgin dance, the graceful song
Pollute with impious revels dire ;”

while the Romans, after a greater display of austerity in the first instance, ended by making their capital not only the emporium of the

treasures of the conquered East, but imported into it also all her extravagance of debauch. The detestation in which the Jews held the religion of their Syrian neighbours preserved them from the like excesses, but at the same time deprived the sexual relations of the Hebrews from all poetry. Marriage, it is true, was held in high esteem amongst them, but solely as a means of begetting children. They still clung to their primitive traditions that a numerous progeny was a signal mark of Jehovah's especial favour. The same struggle, as typified in the rivalry of Leah and Rachel, was still being daily enacted in the homes of the orthodox Israelite. But he could not escape the universal moral corruption which overtook the ancient world towards the



spirit in their teachings with regard to the sexual relations. The founder of Christianity imparts into His Sermons on the Mount and elsewhere an element which the most liberal interpretation cannot absolve from an attempt to inculcate asceticism. His admirable sympathy with the weakness of human nature, never absent throughout his career, is beclouded for once. The mere desire after a woman is irrevocably stigmatised as adultery. Even if we admit that this solely refers to the wife of another, the self-control which would check such desire, or, unable to do this, at least prevent it from culminating into act, is accounted as nothing. If, however, the true exegesis, as some maintain, applies indiscriminately to woman, married or unmarried, the simple intention of courtship with a view to marriage, becomes criminal, unless such bonds be contracted for position, without the least feeling of love.

In fact, according to the Fathers of the Church, Adam and Eve before their fall were to beget children, and multiply without desire and gratification, and as Christianity's aim was to raise mankind as much as possible to the forfeited standard, its conception of mankind was a state of perfection, destitute of all sensualism in the higher as well as the lower signification of the term.

How the world would have fared in a condition of such realisation it scarcely boots us to inquire ; that mankind would have died out, if his precepts had been followed, seems scarcely to strike Paul, who only tolerates marriage as a *pis-aller*, as a lesser evil in comparison with licentious desires, while he considers celibacy as being the only state in which it was possible to serve God with an undivided heart. This is the sum total of the idea of the apostle ; marriage is not the ideal of human nature, it is the accepted satisfaction of a material want, like hunger or thirst.

Tertullian goes further still. An indignation which he imagines to be holy takes possession of him at the mere sight of woman. His outbursts



Jérôme surpasses Tertullian. He wants to destroy marriage root and branch. "God has permitted marriage, I confess," he says, "but Jesus and Mary have hallowed virginity."*

And thousands of young girls, reducing his lessons to practice, withdraw themselves from the world, or stand so much in dread of marriage that they prefer death.

Ten centuries after Christ the essence of conjugal union, the moral influence of the beloved, is still a mystery; nothing proves better that the idea of marriage was still misunderstood than the opinion formed of it by minds most fit to understand it. If one woman more than another could represent to us the wife in all her grandeur, it would be Héloïse. An unbounded, unmixed passion, a matchless enthusiasm for the genius of Abailard, a jealous care for his fame, an unparalleled strength of mind, a powerful learning to share his labours, everything marks her out as the legitimate companion of a great man. Despite all this, her greatest fear is to become this legitimate companion. When Abailard demands her hand of Fulbert, she alone refuses and resists, she quotes the saints and the apostles who forbid marriage to the wise, the pagan philosophers who interdict it to their

* St. Jérôme, *Treatise on Virginity*.

studies. "Is the
"who could bear
the new-born, the
of the nurse to s
disorderliness of se
at his feet, implor
"The title of frien
of mistress, is all I
witness that if A
universe, offered me
wife, and with it the
I should find more c
called your concul
Nevertheless, as we
wife, but persists in
this obstinate refusa
world's opinion? V
again to the story,
this. It is not only
passion. wishin



volting at the thought of fettering the beloved object ; it is something else besides ; it is above all the fear of arresting the brilliant genius of Abailard, of extinguishing by taking possession of "this brilliant torch which God had kindled to illumine the world." A clog at the feet of a great man ; as such Héloïse considered marriage ! An heroic soul, blinded by its very devotion, who did not divine that Abailard, cheered and supported by her would have been twice Abailard, that the continual presence of the beloved one, the maternal vigilance over his actions and labours, enriches the male intelligence with all the feminine delicateness, that the practical aspect of life, a wife and children to support would, in this instance at least, have given to her egotistic lover what he so sorely lacked ; the heart of a man added to his philosophic mind. But she could not judge otherwise. The sects declared marriage as low and grovelling.

The ethico-emotional factor so long wanting, and which must unfold itself from within to without rather than the reverse, was gradually imported into the relations of the sexes by the poets, still there was as yet no complete triumph over the sensuous impulses lying dormant in the normal disposition of human nature, nor is it likely that this ennobling sentiment shall ever stand the undisputed victor.

" L'âme et le corps, hélas ils iront deux à deux,
Tant que le monde ira—pas à pas—côte à côte ;
Comme s'en vont les vers classiques et les bœufs,
L'un disant ; " Tu fais mal !" et l'autre ; " C'est ta faute."

The redundancy of the sensuous element was pruned away, however ; a spiritualistic tenderness, sweet and deep, rose in opposition to the coarse material unions of feudality, but the terrestrial Venus throve still side by side with her celestial sister. The troubadour *Perdigon* shows in contrast with *Bernard de Ventadour*, *Boccaccio* and *Ariosto*, with *Dante* and *Petrarch*, and in this struggle the character of the two passions and their concomitant sentiments display themselves with a renewed energy.

With the spiritualistic tenderness is ever mixed a high respect for woman ; the sensuous

found to occupy a place in their hearts—rarely grandeur and disinterestedness; theirs are certainly not patriotic souls.

Perdigon, the first among the latter class, gives expression to the following: "Women, do not pretend to make me languish. I wish to be rewarded at once; ye women whom I love tenderly, whosoever says me nay is sure to be deserted by me." Well, the same Perdigon drew upon his country the horrors of the Albigenic crusades, by conspiring with the Abbot de Citeaux and the Bishop of Toulouse in exciting the pontifical anger. Perdigon made himself the executor of the Catholic sentences, he became an apostate to the warlike as to the poetical glory of Provence.

Dante and Petrarch, both chaste within the possibilities of man, prove among the most ardent patriots of Italy. The *Divine Comedy* resounds with angry cries against the oppressors of the fatherland. Dante thinks of his country in the midst of hell, amidst the joys of paradise; the image of Italy follows him everywhere; at the sight of her sufferings he turns indiscriminately to Guelph and Ghibeline in order to save her.

Petrarch is a worthy pendant to Alighieri. In his letter to Rienzi there pulsates the heart of an entire nation. Laura and Rome are the sole occupations of his mind. His very love for

the Latin tongue is nothing but love for his country in another form ; he fancies that in reviving the language of Cato and Brutus, he will revive something of the ancient and glorious Roman republic which he dreams for his cherished Italy ; here we have platonic perhaps, but certainly patriotic hearts.

Who on the contrary, and almost at the same period, is the songster and champion of the terrestrial Venus ? A Florentine in name, a Frenchman by birth, a fugitive from his adopted country, a courtier of King Robert, who takes one of the greatest calamities that could befall this country for the frame of a series of licentious, though brilliant and artistic, pictures ; a writer who debases and contemns the very



respective passions of Henry VIII. and Wolsey :
"Through them the son of a king became a
butcher, while the butcher's son became a king."

Insult and disdain are never absent from the
sensual homage to woman. *Crudelis et immemor
voluptas*, the voluptuary is ungrateful and cruel.

Like unto the planets, which, according to the
philosophers, after being whirled from east to
west by the motion of the *primum mobilum*,
resume a contrary proper motion of their own
from west to east, so Italy, in the times that
follow, no longer inspired by the teachings of her
most glorious sons, gradually but surely loses
the sentiment of her nationality, and becomes
more and more corrupted politically and socially.
The test of a nation's morals, as we all know, is
best shown in her literature, hence we have but
to look at the successors of Dante and Petrarch ;
the charming but licentious Ariosto ; the half-
Christian, half-Pagan Tasso. The heroine of
Jerusalem Delivered breathing throughout a
voluptuous languor, is but another Venns in the
guise of Armida, who scarcely scruples to borrow
the woven girdle of the goddess of love,

" Di teneri degni, e di cari vezzi,"

wherewith to make of her lover what Omphale
made of Hercules. It is very beautiful, the glow
of passion transports us ; but we feel far removed

already from the sublime, austere genius of Dante. Even the picture of the virgin loves of Olindo and Sophronia smacks of gallantry and luxury rather than of pure and simple affection.* Bound to the same stake with her, Olindo rejoices in sharing his beloved's pyre, having been unable to share her bed.

"Del rogo esser consorte, se del letto non fui."

When the leaping, licking tongues of fire close around him, his last exclamation is not an invocation to the Deity to receive his parting soul, but one of regret that it cannot glue itself to the lips of her whom he loves.

"L'anima mia nella bocca tua io spiri."

His sensual ingenuity resembles that of Hafiz.



enough," says Mr. Emerson, "but are valuable to the philosopher, as are prayers of saints, for their potent symbolism." "The supreme value of poetry," writes the same author elsewhere, "is to educate us to a height beyond itself, or, which it rarely reaches, the subduing mankind to order and virtue." And again—"The philosophy which a nation receives rules its religion, poetry, politics, arts, trades, and whole history." No one will deny the truth of these remarks, and it follows as a matter of course that the philosophy which could engender such poetry must have been pernicious to morals, by inculcating sensualism as the greatest happiness. Speaking of one other effect of poetry, the American thinker continues—"It affects the character of its readers by formulating their opinions and feelings, and inevitably prompting their daily action. If they build ships, they write 'Ariel,' or 'Prospero,' or 'Ophelia,' on the ship's stern, and impart a tenderness and mystery to matters of fact. The ballad and romance work on the hearts of boys, who recite the rhymes to their hoops or their skates if alone, and these heroic songs or lines are remembered, and determine many practical choices which they make later. Do you think Burns has had no influence on the life of men and women in Scotland?—has opened no eyes and ears to the face of

nature, and the dignity of man, and the charm and excellence of woman?"

Even so, and it is not surprising that Italy grew corrupt under such teachers as Ariosto and Tasso, that she swerved from the grand poetical tradition of Dante. Sole amidst this universal moral decline stood Michael Angelo. His sonnets and chaste life are devoted to a Beatrice also, but the tardive offspring of an age which has departed, he lives and dies alone, resembling one of those gigantic ruins of the past from which the present gradually withdrew farther and farther, as if with fear and shame; resembling still more an exile whose days run their allotted length in his country, geographically considered, but whose contemporaries are of another age.



celebrated master of the day, Pietro Vannucci, otherwise *Il Perugino*, so called after Perugia, where he was domiciled.

As in the case of Rembrandt, young Sanzio's master, was in a short time obliged to confess that his pupil was beyond his teaching; in fact, the latter displayed already an individuality, a fertility of invention, an evident intention to enter hitherto untrodden paths, which Perugino had barely conceived as being among the possibilities.

Time but confirmed more and more the promises of the early precocity of Raphael, to chronicle whose career would be simply to record a series of artistic triumphs and universal recognition thereof.

Modest as true genius is said to be, we learn from Quatremère de Quincy* that Raphael himself, at the age of twenty, was sufficiently conscious of his increasing fame and powers to desire an opportunity of entering more immediately into the lists of competition with the

* After a careful reading of this author's *Life of Raphael*, and that of Passavant, I find that both are substantially the same as to the main biographical facts, and that they only differ in their art criticisms. As a consideration of the latter from their standpoints does not come within the scope of this paper, I shall throughout appropriate said main facts without further mention, merely contenting myself to draw my own deductions.

two men whose strength he had most to fear, Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo. With this view he solicited his uncle to procure him a letter of introduction to the *gonfaloniere* of Florence, in order to obtain the painting of an apartment (supposed to have been in the Palazzo Vecchio) "the commission for which," he writes, "depends on the *gonfaloniere*."

However, while awaiting the result of his application, a more brilliant career was opened to him by the influence of a distant relation, Bramante, the architect to Julius II., who proposed him to the Pope to paint or repaint the state apartments in the Vatican.

In 1508, therefore, Raphael quitted Florence, which city he had visited three times, to repair





with the usages of the world, and what is called the *ton* of the Court people." And yet, strange to say, there is not the least mention up till now of a woman's name in connexion with his. Shall we conclude from this that Raphael had held aloof from all love-intrigue? Assuredly not. Without fully endorsing Mistress Page's opinion anent the respective chastity of man and the turtle, we certainly believe that a Joseph is an exceedingly rare phenomenon, that at no time is a man disposed to increase his tailor's bill, least of all in the sixteenth century, when clothes were much too expensive to incur the risk of having them torn by an infuriated Madame Potiphar. Therefore, in the absence of all information on the subject, we may take it for granted that Raphael was neither better nor worse than most men of his period. Had History condescended to give us some details, however meagre, of his youthful love affairs, we should have been grateful; but History, until lately, was too severe a matron to admit into her company her more sprightly sisters, Historiette and Anecdote, and by her decision we must abide.

With the exception of two sonnets on the backs of his drawings there is no clue to any *amour* previous to Raphael's meeting with *La Fornarina*, and even with regard to her we have a plain fact, nothing else. "Two lines of Vasari

and two portraits," says Passavant, "is all we authentically know anent Raphael's mistress." Fortunately no doubt can be cast upon what we do possess. The rest is nothing but a mass of inventions, mostly contradicting themselves, and as little to be relied upon as the very name of *Fornarina*, the offspring of eighteenth century imagination.

The love-tale itself may be told in almost as few lines as his biographer has employed. About a twelvemonth after his settlement in Rome, Raphael met with Margarita (her surname has not come down to us) as she was bathing her feet in the Tiber, became enamoured of her, took her to his home, and notwithstanding the many intrigues to separate her from him, remained faithful to her until his death, which



for her beauty, the mistress of Raphael's friend Bembo, or like Imperia, the magnificent and talented concubine of his patron Agostino Chigi?

The question as to her beauty Raphael himself has answered in one of her portraits now in the Barbarini gallery, and which was painted between 1512 and 1514. She is seated, the head turned somewhat to the left. The head though shapely is rather too round. The hair of a dark brown, with reddish shades, is arranged in flat bands, fastened behind the ears, and leaving the latter exposed to sight. A rich turban, of a green striped material, brodered with gold, is fixed to the head by means of an *agrafe* of precious stones. The *coiffure* would have imparted to the portrait a something oriental, but for the Roman expression pervading it throughout, and neutralising the former effect. The forehead, moderately high, is large and well-proportioned. From beneath the clearly arched black eyebrows shine large and beautifully limpid eyes, also black, very open and luminous, giving the face a particularly lively and frank expression. The nose, whose dilated and quivering nostrils seem to inhale the joyous breath of life in large draughts, is the weakest part from the standpoint of beauty, being broad at the base, as in the "antiques," its extremity

wanting delicacy and distinction. The mouth, with its voluptuous curves, is somewhat large, though in complete harmony with the expression of the eyes. The chin is too prominent. The ears are perfectly chiselled. The carnation of the face, rich and warm, denotes strong and ardent blood.

If possible, the reader may form for himself the conclusion that such a face has nothing delicate nor refined, though the ensemble* fails not to strike and attract by an exuberance of life and vitality; one feels that he is looking at a puissant nature, where passion abounds, and is ready even to trespass its borders. The fulness and suppleness of the body tell of one of those constitutions, proof against anything and every-



of the figure. The sole accessories to the sombre background are some laurel and myrtle branches of a dark green.

Such is, of all women, the one who exercised an irresistible seduction on Raphael, who, ever in quest of the ideal, aspired to soar higher and higher.

Nor were her intellectual powers of a nature to evoke admiration from a cultured mind like her lover's. Margarita belonged to the lower classes. While Raphael lived, she shared the brilliancy surrounding so great a man ; when he died, she went back into her former obscurity. His love only rendered her famous. Except himself, no one admired, worshipped, or lauded her. No songs were ever composed in her praise. The world saw her disappear when still young. History must needs take count of the sudden silence when her lover died, and conclude from it that she possessed none of the charms of the famous courtesans of the ages of Pericles and Augustus, of Leo X., none of the brilliant qualities of an Aspasia, Lesbia, or Imperia. The *Femina est diabolus* of Origen is not applicable to her. Looking at her portrait, we become aware that she did not even inspire her lover with the idealism so habitual with him, and so plainly discernible in all his other works. However well she may have served him as a model in after

times ; with whatever spiritualistic and imaginary attributes he may have clothed her material beauty in his subsequent paintings, when dealing with fancied subjects, here he confuses himself to the bare truth. It is therefore that in contemplating the pictorial representation of his mistress the mind becomes strangely puzzled ; the idea it would make itself is contradicted by that want of distinction which elsewhere we meet with even in the least of his masterpieces. We are interested without being captivated ; attracted without being charmed. We find ourselves before an enigma. The hand of Raphael is in every part of the picture, but the thought of the master seems to be nowhere. It would seem, as if by a singular exception, Raphael



more palpably, and from these contending forces we may derive perhaps a clue to the secret of this indissoluble bond between two such opposite natures. How often do we find a small man marry a giantess, or a Hercules a pretty little innocent maiden. The same with regard to intellectual contrasts. Rousseau marries a kitchen-maid, Goethe a Christiana Vulpius. Endowed with a delicate constitution, Raphael is invincibly attracted by a woman who enjoys above all robust and excellent health. Called by his divine vocation to depict the most elevated sentiments of human nature, he becomes attached to a woman who seems created for passion and sensuality. Passionate admirer of the elegant amenities of life, he becomes enamoured of a young girl entirely without the pale of his society, uneducated and ignorant of every refinement. At a period of classical quintessence and revival of literature, when mediæval chivalry throws its last glitter, and modern gallantry kindles its first flames, the most courted and feasted man of his time, the artist who occupies at the papal court the rank of gentleman of the chamber, and who lived, according to Vasari, "not as a painter, but as a prince," disdains aristocratic love-affairs, and is enchained by a plebeian beauty. He meets with a woman, a stranger as it were to contemporary civilisation, and chooses her as the companion of his leisure

hours. In this *Renaissance* world, where from Dante to Tasso, and notwithstanding its retrogression, love has been spiritualised à outrance by the genius of Christianity, the greatest of painters in the presence of his mistress almost forgets his art, or cannot grasp it, while reproducing her on canvas. He looks upon this woman, and the reality alone suffices; he paints her without occupying himself of aught else but the truth.

The solving of this riddle is difficult, not altogether impossible. One word, however, before I attempt to do so. I have no wish to hurt any one's feelings—or offend his religious belief—least of all to invest immorality with a fictitious radiance, in order to pass it off as morality. But it were well to remember this



who object to the nude in academies, preferring the dressed at the now defunct Cremorne or kindred establishments; who find all allusion on the stage too transparent, and the gauze of the actresses not transparent enough; in short, of those who think a book should be a cupping-glass wherewith to cure all social evil; who are the *Gérontes*, *Arnolphes*, and *Bartholos* of the nineteenth century; who would have everything wrapped up thickly as their own hypocrisy. For those, be it said at once, I write not. My work is not a box of pills to administer morality by small doses; it is a well-meant, though clumsily executed diagnosis of the diseases bred by the tyranny of conventionality, and as such it shall be accepted or dismissed.

Says Schiller: "The laws of propriety are foreign to innocent nature; only the experience of corruption has given origin to them. But as soon as that corruption has taken place, and natural innocence has vanished from manners, the laws of propriety are sacred, and moral feeling will not offend them. They have the same validity in an artificial world as the laws of nature have in a world of innocence. But the very thing which constitutes the poet is that he banishes from himself everything which reminds him of an artificial world, that he may restore nature in all her primitive simplicity. And if he has done this, he is thereby absolved

from all laws by which a perverted heart seeks security against itself. He is pure, he is innocent, and whatever is permitted to innocent nature is permitted also to him. If thou who readest and hearest him art no longer innocent, and if thou canst not even momentarily become so by his purifying presence, it is thy *misfortune*, not his, thou forsakest him—he did not say for thee.”

Raphael was surely a poet, and if his claim to be absolved from all trammels in his art is admitted good, his claim to be absolved from all conventionality in a matter concerning no one but himself is equally valid. But to this perhaps rather liberal maxim his contemporary world would not agree. His reforms in art they unanimously applauded: his attempted emanci-



forms of utterance . . . but it seems to me our apprehension of this matter is, for the most part, radically falsified thereby. We ought to know withal, and to keep for ever in mind, that these divisions are at bottom but *names*; that man's spiritual nature, the vital Force which dwells in him, is essentially one and indivisible; that what we call imagination, fancy, understanding, and so forth, are but different figures of the Power of Insight, all indissolubly connected with each other, physiognomically related; that if we knew one of them we might know all of them. Morality itself, what we call the moral quality of man, what is this but another *side* of the one vital Force, whereby he is and works? All that a man does is physiognomical of him. *You may see how a man would fight by the way in which he sings*; his courage or want of courage is visible in the word he utters, in the opinion he has formed, no less than in the stroke he strikes. He is *one*; and preaches the same Self abroad in all these ways."

"*You may see how a man would fight, by the way in which he sings.*" We may find out how Raphael loved by the way in which he painted.

The *Renaissance* was neither the total severance and condemnation of the Middle Ages, nor the complete return to Antiquity, but a fruitful

union of both, whence sprang the modern world. This alliance had been prepared by a host of artists, politicians, men of science; nevertheless, none among them were so deeply imbued with its spirit as Raphael; when we speak of the *Renaissance* our minds immediately revert to him and Michael Angelo. But the great sculptor, from his austere and ascetic nature, which earned him the surname of a baptised Phidias, though contributing much to this marriage of Greek art with the Christian muse, left the former subordinate to the latter, whilst Raphael, from his sympathetic and impassioned temperament, granting from the very first each an equal share in this compact, allowed the natural tendency of his mind to betray itself later on in his



of the artist carried everything before him ; his mythological creations reveal to us a spiritualistic genius, proceeding with the completest independence, owing nothing to contemporary sources, and investing his beautiful nymphs and goddesses with " the modern soul itself," as a great French critic has expressed it. If these words be true, they make of Raphael the creator of a secular spiritualism, of which Descartes became the philosopher and theoretic apostle a hundred years after, and they would prove to us that his puissant originality proceeded from his inner consciousness and intelligence rather than from his surrounding influences. Christian art, at its very birth, contained within itself an indestructible and vigorous germ of Paganism, which for twelve subsequent centuries showed itself, now timidly and hidden, then openly and bold, until Raphael by his genius breathed new life into it, causing it to bloom in all its splendour, but with the modern attribute of decency grafted upon it. For the first four hundred years ancient idolatry fought a hard struggle with its new and growing rival to retain its inspiring influence in the arts. It saw Christian thought borrow largely from the antique belief, and applauded the transaction, for it had still present to the memory the transcendent beauty wherewith art had clothed the gods of Homer, now forsaken. The walls of the

was often combated, but :
implacable foes to Pagan
were always ardent defend
Often terribly severe against
betrayed the slightest palpi
Church had momentary re
periods of protection for tl
which, after all, it was not h
It was the Church which i
condemned the iconoclasts, t
whose devastating fury had
a hundred years. She pre
art her open countenance, f
these reminiscences, now be
dimmer, the monks revived t
cells by illuminating their
scripts with them.

For these things were to
quent, to be forgotten, thou
made some shrink from ado

frequently misunderstood, and as a consequence altered in the copying, and their fecund suggestions thereby diminished. Dante borrows his hell from Paganism, but he transforms Charon into a rebellious angel, Minos into a demon, gnashing his teeth and provided with a tail. His Cerberus he makes into an apocalyptic monster, his purgatory is watered by the streams of Lethe. His love for Beatrice is shorn of all earthly considerations, it is as ardent as it is pure, nevertheless he cannot omit to describe her corporeal beauties as well as the incomparable virtues of her soul. Still the asceticism predominates, the plastic element shows only here and there. The same, though to a less extent, is the case with Petrarch, at whose hands Laura becomes a saint, producing but a faint impression of the sovereign beauty of the goddesses. Still it does not follow, therefore, that Dante and Petrarch did not know or appreciate the beauty of Pagan art. On the contrary, the first takes Virgil for his model, the second is among his contemporaries the staunchest admirer and defender of Greek art. It is this that binds him so closely to Boccaccio. Thus when the first great Christian artists appear, the Pagan sap, which had simmered for so long a period, began to hiss and boil. Without attaining the Greek beauty, they aimed at and approached it closer day by

day, so much so that Vasari said of one of them, Andrea Mantegna, who lived in the fifteenth century: "He (Mantegna) never ceased to believe that the masterpieces of ancient artists were more finished than nature herself." Mantegna is not only one of these signal instances of great genius breaking the iron chains of low birth and adverse fortunes, he is also the one, among the great painters of the fifteenth century, upon whom Greek art left its deepest stamp.

And yet we have but to look at his allegorical or mythological subjects, such as for instance *Wisdom obtaining the Victory over the Vices*, in the Louvre, to discover that there is still a great deal wanting. He has not mastered, not gained complete sway over his antique models. Their memory is never absent: he imitates, nay

If, advancing another step, we come to Raphael's master himself, Perugino and his contemporaries, we find decline rather than progress in the appreciation of Greek beauty. Vannucci's introduction of it into his pictures is correct, it even seems to be a labour of love with him, but the task sits unnaturally, he lacks the delicacy and the nuances. The nude forms look as if they were uncomfortable without their clothing, of which they had been divested for the nonce. Perugino is like some of the modern poets who have written in Latin, their diction is faultlessly pure, but it is strained; the harmony of sound is there, but the melody is wanting. Nevertheless he continues to use this foreign language, he wishes to employ it because he understands its power and divines its eloquence. Like most of Raphael's precursors, if he does not realize all he dreams, he at least prepares the way for others to accomplish what he cannot attain.

It becomes easy enough to draw from these incontestable facts the conclusions they contain. For full fourteen centuries painting had attempted to regain possession of the beautiful forms of pagan art, not to deck itself exclusively therewith, but as an ornament to Christian idealism. It sighted the wished-for goal, though still at some distance. To Raphael it was given to attain, and when once attained, to surpass it.

for several centuries
imperious passion.
antique marbles and
and gathered from
the assiduous perusal
these enthusiasts this
to have been composed
of harmonising the beauty
the austerity of the Classical
the moment it was for
one end to another and
most moving passages
littérateurs, theologians
liant knights and learned
luxurious halls of the
geous spots of their gatherings
of conversation—the
joined to the delights
accord of chastity and
words than in their



teaches Socrates that to fully appreciate the beauties of the soul, one must begin by contemplating beauteous bodies? Had he heard the proposition discussed in one of those brilliant and learned assemblies presided over by his friends and patrons? There is small doubt of it. Still, his Christian education held, as yet, the upper hand. How this early training continued to influence him still, the following anecdote may show.

About this time (1503) Raphael came to assist Pinturicchio with the paintings in the library of the Sienna cathedral. In the centre of one of the apartments stood the antique group of the *Three Graces*, brought to light since the eighth century, and beaming with youthful charm and freshness, its many mutilations and defects notwithstanding. The young artist had sat down to sketch the draped figure of a saint. But the Greek beauties were there, staring at him and exercising a mysterious fascination on his soul. How long the struggle against the attraction of the three Pagan enchantresses lasted we know not, but certain it is that the saint's face and figure were turned downwards on Raphael's knees, and that his pen traced on the back of the paper a sketch, whose first strokes, despite evident inexperience, testify plainly that Raphael's genius took possession

there and then of the inner beauty of the plastic forms and nude, and stamped them with the seal of his artistic individuality. The battle between Christian training and aspiration to freedom was not at an end as yet. The sketch was put aside, and more than fourteen months elapsed before it was reproduced into a miniature in oil, measuring about seven or eight inches in width, and as many in height, and which is still considered as the greatest masterpiece of its kind.* Looking at these "Three Graces" we gain an insight into Raphael's character, which enables us to judge the better of his love and its hitherto unexplained peculiarity. His "Graces" are naïve souls, innocent and tender, enclosed in bodies



veiled, draped, hidden, working in the dark, and scattering its gifts mysteriously. The three charming girls of Sanzio express the sympathetic kindness, ready to do good, and reflecting as it were in their features the sufferings they are eager to allay, but their melancholy traits scarcely conceal the rarious brilliancy of innocent youth and pure affection. Their sadness is but momentary. Their charitable task performed, we are sure they will return to their gambols and frolics, cheered by the good accomplished; but for the time being wishing to forget the sad under-current of life until the next opportunity of doing good arrives. There is as little of the Pagan as the Christian element in them. They are simply the incarnation of the best feelings in human nature, without any religious fore- or afterthought, and their spiritual accent is translated into a modern language, though of very ancient origin. Perhaps a homely comparison will convey my meaning better. There are children in whose features the image of the mother and the resemblance to the father strike you as being at once distinct and delicately blended, but whose young and fresh faces offer, nevertheless, new and decidedly individual character. The "Graces" features express in their single-minded benevolence the wish to do good without reference to the symbolic

teachings of the antique tenets of good-will and mutual sympathy, or without an idea of the reward promised by Christianity to charitable deeds. They are moved to kindness to their fellow-creatures by innate goodness of heart, bred by exemplary teaching, perhaps, but which lessons have been forgotten, the same as the child no longer remembers the routine of alphabet and spelling by which he has learned to read. The effect is there, the cause has gone back to oblivion. Such is Raphael's picture of the *Three Graces*, the first-fruit of his adolescent genius and the Antique Muse, the conception of pagan inspiration, modified by modern intelligence, which inquires the why and wherefore.

Though this is supposed to be an essay on



from which, the surroundings amidst which, and the period when, the great genius takes birth, we not only explain his resemblance with his contemporaries, but we also get an insight into the individuality, the different characteristics, and the originality which separate him from them.

In order to do this we will pass over ten years in the painter's life, and see him at work on the frescoes representing the *Triumph of Galatea*. in the villa of his friend and patron, Agostino Chigi, which has since been called the Farnesina. It is not difficult to determine the choice of Raphael's subject, seeing the picture we have given of the æsthetic tendencies of the time. To guide him in the conception of his mythological representation Raphael had three models to select from. The antique writers offer us three different aspects of the personage of Galatea. Theocritus represents her as a young Sicilian girl, sensuous and coquette, who flings apples at the sheep of Polyphemus to draw the cyclop's attention and excite his desires. A little less suggestive, but just as rustic, is the Galatea of Lucian, a village flirt, proud of having been distinguished by the giant, whose virile beauty and virtuoso-talent she is for ever praising. Lastly, there is the Nereid of Ovid's *Metamorphoseon*, a charming queen of the sea, impassioned, but delicate, enamoured of the

beauteous Acis and detesting Polyphemus. The erudite friends of Raphael no doubt entertained him with the several versions of the mythological legend. The matter was probably discussed more than once, and every one tendered his advice. Bibbiena, or some other libertine, was likely to vote for the Galatea of Theocritus, the gallant Bembo for Lucian's, the sentimental Castiglione for the disconsolate mistress of Acis. The fresco proves that Raphael chose the version most capable of being treated in an elevated, pathetic manner, and susceptible of being interpreted by idealistic forms. But his idealism ever remains within the bounds of the easily comprehensible. Though Raphael is very impassioned, very spiritualistic, there is no attempt at inculcating abstract vision or allegorical



One derives nothing but an intellectual enjoyment from it. It is because the Nereid's grief sanctifies her nudity. Through the body one perceives the soul, and it is the latter that rivets the attention and vanquishes all equivocal thought. Pagan inspiration has had a hand in the composition of it, nay, contributed a large share, but has been met by modern intelligence, which while tolerating has subjugated it, and proclaimed that freedom from restraint need not degenerate into licentiousness. He has avoided the idea of mystic interpretation, he has steered clear of the sensual grossness of Annibal Caracci.

But if this modern intelligence, which recognises modesty as its first law, appears anywhere, it is in the *History of Psyche*. The new type realised by Raphael shows itself in these frescoes in all its power, and for a very good reason perhaps. Raphael's love-affair is not unlike that mythological fable. Psyche represents to some extent Margarita, Raphael Cupid, Society, but female society above all, Venus, and the Pope, Jupiter. Society in Raphael's time had no objection to her members indulging in clandestine love-intrigues, any more than Venus minded her son enjoying the favours of the Olympian beauties of easy virtue, or even of mortal fair ones, but when the painter, like

Cupid, so far forgot himself as to pay his court *au grand sérieux* to a woman without the fashionable or god-like sphere, it was time that Society should protest.

“La fille d’un mortel en vent à ma puissance,
Rendez-la malheureuse!”

exclaims Venus.

A common city lass keeps Raphael from contracting a marriage with an aristocratic lady, the niece of a cardinal. “Make the common city lass wretched,” cries Society, and forthwith sends one of her emissaries in the shape of a priest to confine her in a convent, where she languishes for a twelvemonth. Cupid applies to Jupiter, Raphael applies to Leo, and his mistress is restored to him, and henceforth the lovers



the child of his age, he is at least very unlike his father. As for his work, I think I have proved that he was bound neither by pagan tradition, nor by Christian novelty. As a man, the friendships he cultivates are lasting; unlike Michael Angelo, he quarrels with no one. At sixteen he has pupils who remain faithful to him through life. At the same age he reconciles his family, who had quarrelled among themselves, he appeases his stepmother, and provides for his young sister. Later on, his generosity keeps pace with his growing fortune. Here is a proof. In 1519 there lived in Rome an old man of remarkable learning, and still more remarkable stoicism. He originally belonged to Ravenna, his name was Fabio Calvo. This man had a profound contempt for money. He abandoned his allowance, made to him by the Pope, to his parents, while he himself lived on herbs and cabbages, weltering in a hole worse than Diogenes' tub. Emaciated by work, he fell ill, and was on the point of death. Some one, however, was watching over him; "Fabio is taken care of like a child," says an eye-witness, "by the very rich and honoured Raphael of Urbino, a young man of the rarest kindness and most admirable intellect."

A stranger to envy, while Michael Angelo depreciated him, he openly thanked God for

as well as ear
never shrank fr
to the highest
even cardinals.
obliged to leave
asked his frien
representing St.
in the church
came to inspect
the somewhat t
"Do not be sur
have purposely
more than likely
blushing in heav
see the Church g
the rumbling of
out a few years
of Luther. Sti
to doubt the ort
died a believer



served him from the corruption from which scarcely any of his contemporaries escaped. If he had followed the example of his age, he would have been an epicurean like Bembo, libertine like Bibbiena, magnificent voluptuary like Agostino Chigi, indecent like the *Sodoma*. Let historians be as lenient and enthusiastic as they will with regard to the orgies of the *Renaissance*, those nocturnal *fêtes*, those magnificent banquets, or rather gigantic *ripailles*, worthy of exciting the *verve* of Rabelais—whose advent was near—there is not one of them who has ever connected the name or the personage of Raphael with those sensuous follies. The *amours* of his contemporaries and friends are public, and their details, far from edifying, are well known. We know who was the *Morosina*, the woman so celebrated for her beauty, the mistress of Bembo, by whom he had two children. We are not without information with regard to Imperia, the magnificent concubine of the opulent Chigi. Of the young girl so passionately beloved by Raphael, what do we know? But little, but that little is in no way unfavourable to her. She was supremely beautiful, and her lover remained faithful to her until death. The Church had not legitimatised this union, it is true, for Raphael was sufficiently worldly-wise to know that by giving her the legitimate title of wife he would

of offending prudery we s
contract, and so did Ra
refused all offers of marria
impenetrable veil which
the inquisitiveness of po
him and for his mistres
affair attended by any o
own making which so
hallowed passions of thos
respect, as well as in h
from his age, he gave
taking it as an example.
as in his Pagan works, hi
displayed, his deviation t
candid. He prefers lo
judging the connexion b
Raphael, history should n
should also remember th
spired him more than



the assertions to the contrary,* that she prolonged her lover's life, and that without her there would have been at least six or seven years less of that existence, too short, alas ! and each hour of which has proved an incalculable boon to posterity. His affections were given to an humble, unsophisticated girl, whom he could mould at will, whom no doubt he succeeded in ennobling and elevating, the same as he elevated his art, while leaving it unfettered. What shall we say to those who admit of no passion, unless it be like a placid river, running between the two level banks, bounded by the Church on one side, by the vestry on the other? Simply this: Human weakness seeks association, men are sheep by nature, they follow whither the bell-wether leads. But the original man needs no such guiding. His good sense will prevent him from attempting to mount to heaven, while alive, because he has heard of Jacob's dream; or to descend into hell because Virgil and Dante returned safely from their imaginary journey thither. He will simply be guided by his own reason, not by the teaching of others. "What," asks Mr. Jones, "would become of a world composed of people who have all their different ways of thinking, who will not be guided by

* For the accusations brought against her, and until recently believed, of having driven her lover into excesses, and so caused premature death, see the various biographies of Raphael.

position of a
denounce an
than that, if
go to pieces.
man shall not
little danger
pense with cer
lunar or other
work a vast cl
of the species.
digious *vis iner*
tary stupidity
originality spre
Prévot-Parad
ing of this essa
ne sont pas sensi
vivre libres n'e
nombre d'âmes.
the higher mean



THE MEDAL REVERSED.

CLÉMENT MAROT.

"Adeone hominem immutari
Ex amore, ut non cognoscas eundem esse?"

TERENCE.

"Renversé doucement dans les bras de Thaïs,
Le front ceint d'un léger nuage;
Je lui disois : lorsque tu me souris
Peut-être sur ma tête il s'élève un orage.
Que pense-t-on de mes écrits ?
Je dois aimer mes vers, puisqu'ils sont ton ouvrage.
Occuperai-je les cent voix
De la vagabonde Déesse ?
A ses faveurs pour obtenir des droits,
Suffit-il, Ô Thaïs, de sentir la tendresse ?
Renonce, me dit-elle, à l'orgueil des lauriers ;
Laisse ce froids honneurs qu'ici tu te proposes ;
Il faut des couronnes de roses
A qui peignit l'Amour. . . ."

DORAT, *Les Baisers*.

"Einstmals ein armer Sänger war
Liebte heimlich das schönste Kind,
Sie wollte Blumen in's dunkle Haar,
Der Sänger dacht', sie liebt' ihn gar,
Sie wollte Blumen nun in's Haar
Wie schöne Kinder halt sind.

"Da geht der Sänger und sucht und sucht,
Suchte Blumen für's schönste Kind.

Da hat ihm ein böser Geist geflucht,
Der Sänger hat vergebens gesucht,
Ein böser Geist hat ihn geflucht,
Es kam ein scharfer Wind.

"Der Frühling floh, es ward ihm kalt,
Winter holte den Frühling ein,
Er fing den armen Frühling bald
Packte ihn drunten am Tannenwald
Schlug ihn todt und macht' ihn kalt
Da steht nun den Sänger allein."

KARL VON HOLTEI,

Epilogue to Lorbeerbaum und Bettelstab.

LONG before the famous aphorism, *Ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut*, had become current coin, Frenchmen were deeply imbued with the truth of its philosophy. In fact, at no time of their political and social history did they ever fail to put the power of woman if not on an exact level with that of God, at least in very



when at hand, the answer would be that its absence in "packing a case of social porcelain" would be severely felt. It were well, therefore, when dealing with the love-story of any Frenchman, not to lose sight of this influence as a peculiar factor, but in the present instance it cannot be too much insisted on. Though Clément Marot is not to be accounted as great a man as any of those whom we have treated hitherto, we claim a place for him in our gallery for two reasons: the first, because he is to be regarded as the prototype of all our modern Society poets; the second, because his love-story illustrates a new progress in civilised life; the usage through real or simulated affection of woman's influence as ambition's tool, for even at the outset we must not disguise from ourselves that Clément Marot's chief passion (he had more than one) in no way partook of the elevated character of Dante's, or even of the sincerity of Petrarch's, or of the noble disinterestedness of Memling's, or of the unwavering constancy of Raphael's. No; if we might venture to call it so, Marot's love was "*L'Amour pour rire*," it could stand neither brunt nor trial. It might have been the "gardener of the soul"—as love has felicitously been termed—for it certainly produced the most beautiful flowers of poetry, but it lacked that principle of energetic

heat of court
his love wither
Clément Ma
town of Cahor
river Loz, wh
smiling, someth
country. Botl
from Normandy
pitch their tent
young Clément
life nearly alon
being a poet at t
if that can be ca
but a human ma
pedantic verses,
Greek, and full
classicisms boiled

* Marot had none of
genius, for in an epigram



while his royal patroness lived, Jean Marot appears to have been sufficiently appreciated and rewarded to enable him to bring his family, from whom he had been separated, to Paris. *En une matinée*, says Clément, alluding to this change of domicile, *n'ayant dix ans, en France fus mené*.*

The father intended the boy to become a poet like himself, and as such instructed in the principles of the school of the *grans rhétoriciens* of which Jean was so distinguished a member; a school, notwithstanding its heaviness and pedagogic pretensions, very much the fashion at that period. Clément seemed not to have had much sympathy with his father's aspirations to make a poet of him, nor with the intellectual drill he had to undergo for the purpose. Many years afterwards, when looking back to his apprenticeship, he gives vent to his spleen against his teachers.

" En effect c'estoyent de grans bestes
Que les régens du temps judis,
Jamais je n'entre en Paradis,
S'ils ne m'ont perdu ma jeunesse."

Fortunately an event happened which emancipated him from his father's leading-strings. The

* Believing the reader to be sufficiently acquainted with French, I shall only give the English of those words which have passed out of the modern language, leaving the remainder in the original.

dismissal proved
bondage to the s

Disgusted at t
part of the King
it best not to ex
of so precarious
Clément was sent
in the schools. 1
without protectio
the heir to the c
who had just m
the deceased qu
was successful, be
the prince's house.

It would appe
which the father
was to bear fruit,
not long been o
when he met wit
paternal drilling



social position of the Juliet has come down to us, all we can with certainty determine is that she lived somewhere in the *Vieille Rue du Temple*, for in bidding her adieu (she was either virtuous or coquette, perhaps both), he exclaims—

“ Adieu, Palais, et la Porte Barbette,
Où j’ai chanté mainte belle chanson,
Pour le plaisir d’une jeune fillette.”

And on the authority of Sauval we know that the *Porte Barbette* was situated in the *Vieille Rue du Temple*.

The fair one, for what reason we know not, seemed either to care little for the sprouting poet, or else was indisposed to go beyond platonic affection. Marot, on the other hand, though young still, was rather inclined the other way, perhaps as much from vanity as from natural passion, and thought it beneath the dignity of a young lover who was a poet to boot to sigh in vain. It is more than probable, as we shall see hereafter, that he had studied Horace and Ovid rather than Petrarch, and the two former masters had not led him to expect a vigorous resistance on the part of a young girl to whom he thought it would be more difficult to withstand the temptation than to conform to a severity which she could only know from theory. The young lady stood her ground firmly, despite his lamentations.

breast. Clemer
wasting his time
he vents his spleen
object of his affections
however, in the end
from whom he takes
cite in my essay
have sung and written
too long before
much; I leave
pleasure of loving
I'll see whether
the warrior's career
to be won as a man

" Celle qui c'est
Ou j'ai esté
Mais si pour
Parmy les pieux
C'est trop cher
Devant sa porte
Et mieux vaut
On'avoir l'honneur

C'est trop souffert de peine et marrison,
Pour le plaisir d'une jeune fillette.
Je quitte tout, je donne, je resigne
Le don d'aymer, qui est si cher vendu."

He, however, leaves the door open as it were to less difficult conquests; the whole of his nature is already foreshadowed in the following, which is a continuation of the same *ballade*.

"Je ne dy pas que je me determine
De vaincre Amour, cela m'est defendu,
Car nul ne peut contre son arc tendu;
Mais de souffrir chose si mal congrue
Par mon serment! je ne suis plus si grüë."

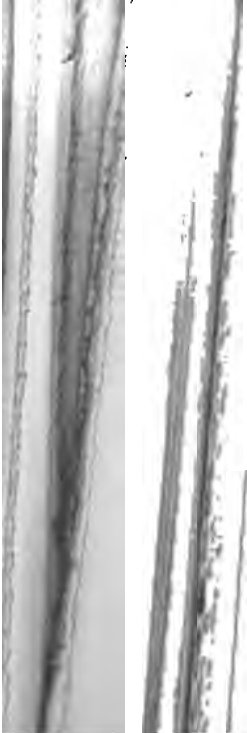
This is the language of a young man not quite twenty, who is supposed to be "hard hit." "No, no," he says, "I will not engage to withstand the power of love, but I'll certainly suffer no inconvenience; things must be smooth. I'll not stand about at night under her window, for I do not care to be taken up by the patrol, or to knock myself against some barrow or cart for the sake of a little chit of a girl."

When we look at this first passion of Marot, we find it no passion at all, not even calf-love, which, howsoever ridiculous, finds a certain amount of sympathy in us, the same as the child that has the measles evokes our pity, though we know full well that in ordinary cases the affair is not all dangerous, and that the sufferer will recover. It is for this very reason, perhaps, that devoid of all nobleness as we judge Marot's

affairs.

For, after part in the more than th it, and as ea passion differe the seriousness passion in oth knowledge the unavoidable p stances. This refuses to run i the lover, hence into the eagern great sympathy angry with thos his calm dignit approbation rat compassion. It

something in common. The chances are, that if any young people in real life, situated similarly to the heroes of Shakspeare's play, were to put an end to their existence, our private opinion would agree with the official verdict of the coroner, "temporary insanity." In fact, in our modern society, deeply tinged with cynicism, all serious and strong expressions of love appear ridiculous to a third person, and however eloquent the protestations of the lover may sound to his mistress, to us, though we pardon them, they do not do so. He himself, and modern playwrights who represent him on the stage, are sensible of this; hence their mode of depicting his situation in a bantering though good-natured style. Were they to do otherwise their endeavours to interest us would be received with raillery and ridicule. We have long grown weary of the grave, pedantic, and long-winded sentences with which Cowley and Petrarch show us the violence of their attachments; but the gaiety and gallantry of Ovid and Horace, and hence of Marot, are always agreeable. Even then the love-affair must not be an altogether smooth one. It must be buffeted about a little by contrary winds; the author who introduces two lovers in a scene of perfect security, expressing their mutual bliss, would raise laughter and not sympathy. The happiness of others is pretty well indifferent to

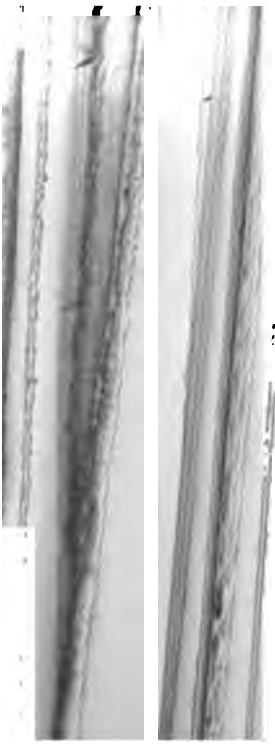


of a shipwre
the coast, wi
of the pictur
the annoyanc
pelled to ad
know not, b
sustain the n
catastrophe an
up by hopes a
ruin' must be
minious collaps
downfall, beca
high. It is a
branches shake
already, Marot
teresting, beca
with the poetic

Snubbed by
Themis, quitting
the female mvt



to pass into the hands of Francis I., enjoyed great influence at the court. He was still young, though already Secretary of Finances; and not being destitute of learning himself, took great pleasure in patronising men of letters. Having conceived a great affection for his page, he treated him more as an equal than as a dependent, encouraged his still timid muse, and paved his way to future renown, by divining as it were his still dormant talents. For at this period nothing as yet showed any indication of originality, or even the hope of such, in Clément's verses. He remained a disciple of his father, who was still alive, and never ceased to inspire his son with the greatest respect, though there was, doubtless, a lurking suspicion in the latter's mind that his sire's art was simply the art of versifying. "Inspiration," it has been said, "is like yeast. 'Tis no matter in which of half a dozen ways you procure the infection; you can apply one or the other equally well to your purpose, and get your loaf of bread." But Jean Marot either did not know the shop, or else was like the Israelites in their exodus, in too great a hurry to reach his Canaan of court approbation to trouble much about the leavening of his bread. And still more like the Hebrews, he compelled his son to prefer the unleavened loaf to the leavened. As a natural consequence,



Clément is
poet, a kind
employed to
in a kind
in a few years
powerful inst.
future poets c

This transfi
effected by a
fortunes. Hi
Villeroy, add
Francis I., m
visitor at the
than that of st
and gallant r
learned when h
no opportunity
distinction mad
pieces which ar
dull and heav



superior woman, in the daily contact and intimacy with her, everything—heart, reason, wit, and language, seemed to have changed in Marot. His occupations as a poet were, however, not sufficiently numerous to prevent him from following the King to the army, and his father having died in 1526, he stepped by right of heritage as it were, though apparently not without opposition, into his sire's poetical shoes. They were very heavy, and like a state-coach, Marot thought well to use them on ceremonial occasions only. At other times he elected to convey his verse in a less showy, but lighter vehicle. Jean Marot's poetical *chaussure* might not unaptly be termed the wooden shoes of poetry, making a great clatter, though progress in them was far from rapid. On the part of Francis, it was but justice that he should do something for Clément, who had bravely fought at Pavia, and distinguished himself in that disastrous battle. Wounded in the arm, taken prisoner like the King, but liberated long before the royal captive, thanks to the profound disdain of the Imperialists for small ransoms and small fry, he made his way back to France, and henceforth appeared to have handled neither sword nor lance. He abandoned himself entirely to literary pursuits, having but one aim, discharging his employ of court poet near Madame

shortened hi

If we hav
of Marot's l
question. W
transforming
versifier into
tist, a poet in
of the word, t
lastic and pe
father's comp
the vulgar car
accomplished
assurance of his
We think not.

though perhap

It has been
among the rep
to rail at the
charm of crow
but he



having been a sycophant, or of being in the least degree possessed with the genius of obsequiousness; still the interview with his sovereign proved a source of grateful recollection, lasting him throughout his life, and this apart from the pecuniary profit derived from it. To produce such an effect, it is not at all necessary that the prince should have great talents or exalted virtues. There is in mankind an inherent disposition to admire the rich and powerful, which has unjustly been called flunkeyism; for the flunkey is insolent when he thinks that insolence will serve his purpose better than submission, or when there is nothing to be derived from the latter. The flunkey is, as a rule, ignorant; while, on the contrary, visible respect to superior position, on which is founded the distinction of rank, is upheld by the most educated classes of the community. The deaths of Charles I. and Louis XVI. provoked more resistance and indignation among the better classes, opponents and partisans alike, than among the same two sections of the people. The two monarchs were regretted more than all the innocent blood shed in the Civil War and Revolution. Humanity is profoundly conservative, despite all that has been said to the contrary. Take for example Louis XIV., who had neither great virtues, great

Europe
as one
his cou
and the
historia
most gra
was cour
prince, a
were sup
inferior r
he would

It was t
king, but
eclipsing
him, by h
siasm, tale
sonal action
of the ma
the world.



less, an irresistible charm, galvanising by its contact the dullest and most prosaic nature.

• That in Marot's case this influence was increased by the privilege of a still closer approach to Francis is undoubted. In the presence of his royal patron he becomes another being, a different poet, speaking a language more firm and terse, clearer and more correct—a language in which there is no halting to find the right word, nor *a wait* to seek its right place. Especially is this noticed when he addresses himself directly to his sovereign. However witty with others already, he is never seen to such an advantage as when in presence of “his Majesty.” One would say that a *tête-à-tête* with the King is absolutely necessary to make him altogether natural and at his ease, to abandon himself entirely to his spontaneity, to his happy laughter, and, as a great modern critic has said, “to those outbursts of noble pride which so originally proceed from his mock humility.” Read the following. It is an epistle narrating to the King a theft, real or assumed, of which his poet has been the victim, and winding up by appealing gallantly to the royal *largesse* to make good his loss. There is nothing in French poetry, from La Fontaine to Musset, that surpasses it in its own *genre*, whether for finesse, delicacy of turn, or suppleness of versifying.

E
L'
Si
J'a
Go
Pi
Ser
An
Pri
Par
Ce v
De q
Et q
Si se
Et m
Puis
Argen
Et ne
Car o
Bref, l
Pour s
Saye, c
De me
Tout le
Si just
Vous l'
Finable
Dont



Soyez certain qu'au partir dudit lieu
N'oublyà rien, fors à me dire adieu.
Ainsi s'en va, chatouilleux de la gorge*
Ledict valet, monté comme un Sainet George,
Et vous laissa, Monsieur, dormi son saoul
Qui au resveil n'eust sceu finer, d'un soul.
Ce Monsieur là (Sire) c'estoit moi-même
Qui, sans mentir, fus au matin bien blesme
Quand je me vy sans honneste vesture
Et fort fâché de perdre ma monture.
Mais de l'argent que vous m'aviez donné
Je ne fus point de la perdre estonné;
Car vostre argent, très debonnaire Prince
Sans point de faute est sujet à la pince.†
Bien tost après ceste fortune là
Une autre pire encores se mesla
De m'assaillir, et chascun jour m'assaut,
Me menaçant de me donner le saut
Et de saut m'envoyer à l'envers,
Rithmer sous terre, et y faire des vers.‡
C'est une lourde et longue maladie
De trois bons moys, qui m'a toute essourdie
La povre teste, et ne veult terminer.

* * * *

Voilà comment depuis neuf mois en ça
Je suis traicté. Or ce que me laissa
Mon larroneau, longtems a, l'ay vendu
Et en sirops et julez despendu.
Ce neantmoins ce que je vous en mande
N'est pour vous faire ou requeste ou demande;
Je ne veulx point tant de gens ressembler
Qui n'ont soucy aultre que d'assembler.
Tant qu'ils vivront, ils demanderont eulx;
Mais je commence à devenir honteux,

* *Chatouilleux de la gorge*—literally, ticklish round his throat; figuratively, destined to be hanged.

† Subject to being filched.

‡ The word *vers* signifies worms in this instance.

Q
V
E
A
J
A
Q
O
Q

Without
huitain, w
de St. Am
ful mediat

“Pr
A
J
Et
Pa
Qu
Je
Qu

It is sc



influence besides that of the King he owed his brilliant inspiration.

Here we are trenching more or less on the domain of fiction, based, as it were, on historical speculation. We know that Marot entered the service of the Duchess d'Alençon, and there is little doubt that he, like every one else, high or low, with whom this accomplished woman came in contact, felt the irresistible charm unanimously attributed to her by every one of her contemporaries. It is also certain that this fascination ripened later on into a more impassioned and less platonic attachment, though we would scarcely venture to go the length of the many biographers who imagined that Marot had but to sigh to be not only admitted, but proclaimed, the happy lover of his princely patroness. Of this, however, we must speak by-and-by.

Marot now having a recognised position, and that at the Court, would have been unlike a Frenchman if he had omitted to provide himself with a mistress. Taught by experience that young women in humble life are apt to be particular as regards the "intentions" of their would-be Cicisbeos, he cast about in different waters. "Seek and thou shalt find" applies to more than one kind of quest, and Marot appears to have been successful, and perhaps beyond his

expectations. A dame of high degree, whom succeeding generations have supposed to be the famous Diana de Poitiers, became the object of his passion, which passion was reciprocated. Unfortunately, the first part of this theory—the identity of the future Duchess de Valentinois with the lady whom Marot celebrates under the name of Diana—has of late been disproved by a writer whose authority is not to be gainsaid. M. de Héricault would wish for nothing better than to leave his hero in possession of this *bonne fortune*, but chronology is a stubborn fact, and if the surmises of the preceding biographers be correct, Marot's happiness would date from a period when the beautiful Countess de Maulevrier was still unknown at the Court. Accident,



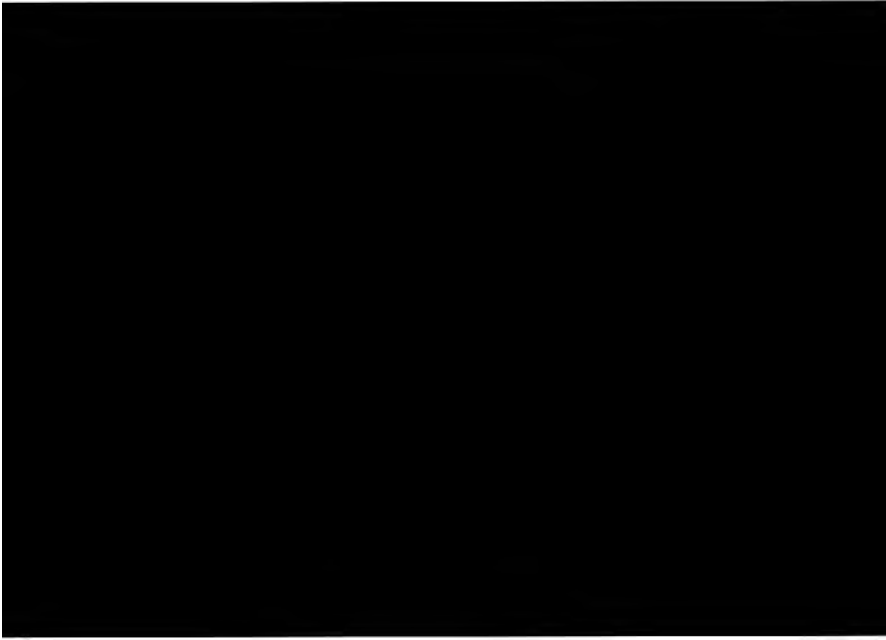
ously remarks, "at the cost of a payment which she had to discharge in person"—in other words, of becoming the King's mistress. This happened when Marot was about twenty-eight, and in the ascendant of his career, and would in some measure account for his new mistress's power at Court. There remains but one question—would she have jeopardised that power and her newly acquired position by a love intrigue, the disclosure of which must have proved fatal to herself and to the partner of it? The question is difficult to determine.*

Not so difficult the existence of the love-intrigue itself with a noble lady, wielding considerable influence at Court, and by him called Diana, with which name we must content ourselves, our researches having failed to discover any other. The first advances seem to have come from the fair one. Here is what Marot writes in 1524, which goes still further to make us uncertain about the real personage to whom his verses are addressed:—

" Un an y a que par toy commencée
Fut l'amitié. Et sachant ta pensée
Esclave et serf d'amour fus arresté
Ce qui devant jamais n'avoit esté."

* Among the mistresses of Francis there may have been another Diana, or the theory that Clément merely celebrated his lady-love under that name may equally hold good.

This would bring the beginning of the *liais* down to 1523, and if the lady was indeed Diana de Poitiers, all we can do is to compliment her and her lover's memories upon the matchless audacity of a proceeding from which even a nineteenth century courtesan and her paramour would shrink, though the discovery of such deceit would in no way be attended by the dire consequences which would have resulted from three or four hundred years ago. It is hardly to be credited that an astute woman, as Francis's mistress is described to be, would have risked her head, or at least her liberty, in such a fashion; nor is it likely that she would have done so when her connexion with the King was still young. Upon the whole the idea of Diana de Poitiers





caring very earnestly perhaps for the holier mission of love—the same as the great Italian violinist is said to have cared less for his art than for the money it brought him—but certainly determined that passion's symphonies should be executed with every perfection of which as yet he was master, because that perfection was to bring him renown. The bungler in love is like the Tourangeau of Balzac's *Contes Drolatiques, qui fait sa soupe de tout pain*. Marot was too experienced already to commit such a mistake. He himself may have been convinced of the insincerity of his passion, but he knew that in those times, especially with a poet, words more than deeds were accounted the test of a deeply seated attachment, and that his muse to be inspired should have a fit object for her song. And after all we have not changed much. Even in our days in love affairs an interested sham is found to be superior to a disinterested truth. In this lies the secret, perhaps, why men are content to reward so magnificently the clever *trompeuses* yclept *marchandes d'amour*.

Acting upon this knowledge, the poet invoked all the resources of his budding genius to charm his new lady-love. He was not altogether a novice, though his first campaign had proved so signal a failure, but as a lost battle is often more instructive to a general than half a dozen victories,

he deemed himself sufficiently clever to have profited by his defeats and to avoid such losses in tactics for the future. His plan was to risk no serious engagement, no violent assault, but to throw out skirmishers, to sap and mine, to reconnoitre the positions. With this intention he began to sound his Dulcinea's force of assistance, by submitting some principles in the science of besieging the heart.

“J'ai en amour trouvé cinq points exprès ;
Premièrement il y a du regard ;
Puis le devis et le baiser après
L'atouchement le baiser suit de près
Et tous ceux-là tendent au dernier point
Qui est, Hé quoy ! Je ne le dirai point.” . . .

“Nay, nay,” said Diana, “that's earn



attachment it would be found in the verses wherein he takes leave of his Diana. Unless we are mistaken, the feelings of the heart must on such occasions always obtain the victory over brilliancy and vividness of imagination. This is, however, not the case with Marot. His third Elegy, containing his farewell, is a finished performance, full of pretty ideas and witticisms, but it reminds us too much of the annual benefit speech of a certain popular actor and theatrical manager, the tears look like little globules of glass imported from Birmingham for the occasion, and produced at the fitting time by a dexterous manipulation of the handkerchief wherein they are hidden. They even fall to the ground, making a slight noise, and then we discover that they owe nothing to the lachrymal glands, but everything to the glass-blower. After he is wounded—luckily in the left arm—and taken prisoner at Pavia, he still keeps up a correspondence with Diana, always in verse on his side, in which he says some of the sweetest things, and being, as we have seen, shortly liberated, he returns and renews his solicitations with redoubled ardour. But—and here is the difference between him and Petrarch—we never get weary of his effusions, they are too bright—full of delicate hints. He knows that an *honest* woman cannot consent frankly and openly to

grant such favours as he asks, but to provide such coyness he throws out a suggestion, which might have served Lord Byron for the model of his famous lines in *Don Juan* ;

“ A little still she strove, and much repented,
And whispering ‘ I will ne’er consent—consented.’ ”

“ Sçavez vous ce que fait une femme de bien ?
En deux mots je vais vous l’apprendre ;
Elle ne donne jamais rien,
Mais elle se laisse tout prendre.”

Diana seemed to have kept to her text—*Vivre, mais avec des gens sérieux*. Marot did not understand things that way ; though he said that he will be patient, he fails to keep his word. “ The best thing you can do,” was probably the answer, inspired by a secret chagrin that might act upon the advice. For there is



managing her, lead him to all kinds of unsuccessful attempts. Here he is much below the tact of the examples he has set himself at the outset—Horace and Ovid. He grows bitter and violent; irrevocably he tears the bond asunder instead of gently loosening it. He should have imitated the example of one of his contemporaries and friends, Mellin de St. Gelais, who, finding himself in a similar position with his mistress, wrote to her—

“Nostre amitié est seulement
Descousuë et non dechirée,
Et s'unira facilement,
Si de vous elle est désirée.
Amour qui la flesche a tirée
Rhabillera cette cousture,
Et n'ayez peur qu'elle ne dure;
Car s'il est vrai ce qu'on afferme,
L'acier au lieu de sa soudure
Est plus fort qu'ailleurs et plus ferme.”

“Making it up,” seems to have had no pleasure for Marot. But if unwilling to renew the acquaintance, he ought at least to have kept silent; instead of which, he began to insult the woman to whom he had paid so much homage, attributing the vilest motives to her for this rupture. It was but natural that reprisals should follow on her part. Throughout it would appear that Diana never contemplated going beyond the limits of the platonic; and though she might have found excuses for Marot's wounded vanity produced by

disappointment, when he so far forgot himself as to publish the bitterest lampoons, she revenged herself in a signal manner by having him arrested on a charge of having eaten bacon during Lent, a charge which, however frivolous in our days, was no small matter then, when the heretical doctrines of Luther were slowly filtering their way into France. Marot took the matter as a joke. The King could not leave him to his fate; and it is to the King he wrote, who had him set at liberty. If proof were wanted that his Diana was not Diana de Poitiers, it would be found in this interference of the King. Here then we have, as far as this lady is concerned



importance attached to them. This is easily explained. To most men of genius love is neither what nature nor what Christianity and society have created it. It is not the imperious material want, to the satisfaction of which are attached lively but fleeting pleasures, nor the sober partnership, which while regulating the passions, often destroys them by leaving nothing more to be wished for. To them it is the creation of an ideal kingdom, full of noble sentiments, important trifles, *great littlenesses*, poesy, spiritual aspirations, devotion, moral beauties, enchanting harmonies, and situated far above the vulgar grossness which steps in as it were with assured possession. Their imagination pictures it as a journey towards the unknown—the mystery must therefore not be eliminated—by two creatures, united for the time being into one, and borne on the wings of expectant and increasing rather than of consummated bliss. A marriage *de par devant* the parson or registrar does not tally with such ideas of individual liberty. These men will make a virtue of necessity, and contract such unions from motives of interest or ambition, from a sense of duty to the community, from a wish to perpetuate their name, but they will gloss over the particulars, and these things will not change as long as love is regarded as the aim, instead of the means of recruiting the

—such as
Neither of these the
while the wise man
However, Marot
him from embarking
in common with man
been of the opinion
being twitted with
told her, "that his
sumption, his vices
rate it is not long be
a love-intrigue more i
with the supposed
time it is Marguérite
tactress, of whom he
rewards the affection.
ment there is a doubt
the sharers, in this ins
only uncertainty is, ho
beyond the limits of ex
it went beyond these lin



In the face of conflicting evidence this becomes difficult to determine. Not that the authoress of the *Heptameron* professed great rigidity of morals in her works, or that we should be disposed to answer for her virtue after reading what she has written ; but the party spirit, never dead in France, and attaching itself to things past as well as present, has considerably exaggerated matters—one side representing the princess as a saint, while the other throughout treats her as a Messalina. She was neither the one nor the other, but simply a high-born and high-bred lady, deeply imbued with the spirit of her own time, her mind given to gallantry and *propos légers*. As for the rest, those who have judged and convicted, have only done so from the same evidence that we in a condensed manner shall lay before our readers : they had nothing more or better to go upon. This evidence consists mainly of extracts from Marot's poetry. Something else should also be fairly borne in mind. Though Marot had known and been protected by Marguerite for many years, the question of a more tender feeling than that of friendship seems never to have arisen between these two until shortly before and after her marriage with Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, a husband ill-suited to so young and spirited a girl, and who upon undoubted authority treated her badly, and

would have treated her worse without the interference of her brother. What more natural than that she should have sought intellectual consolation with an agreeable, young, and brilliant companion, like Marot; that between them they should have concocted satires and complaints against the old and disagreeable husband, satires in which the following, said to be written by the princess herself, but in which Marot had no doubt a share, is an example.

“ En languissant et en grieve tristesse
Vit mon las cuoeur, jadis plein de liesse
Puisque l'on m'a donné mari vieillard.
Helas pourquoy ? Rien ne sait du vieil art,
Q'apprend Venus, l'amoureuse Déesse.”

Marot was too vain not to feel flattered by the preference of a young and charming princess.



Marguérite is not behindhand in this amorous and brilliant contest of epigram. She also answers in verse, telling him that he appeals to no sterile memory, inasmuch as the recollection of the incident—

“Souvent me fait par amour continuë
Avoir desir du recommencement.”

Contemporary modesty, of course, stands astonished at this freedom of speech and action ; but it should bear in mind, that in France until very recently, but especially in the sixteenth century, love in its spiritual bearing was a kind of intellectual disease, to which the lower classes were unsusceptible, and which was confined exclusively to highly cultured minds, where it appeared in the form of an unhealthy refinement and elegant corruption, engendering much brilliant but often obscene wit. Is not the cure of scepticism and cynicism which the very moderns have applied to it, a cure involving the sobering dietary of matter-of-fact, the negation of all poetical stimulants, worse than the disease itself perhaps ? Royal sisters and daughters, even genteel maidens may speak no longer as spoke Marguérite, even should they think the same. The rule forbidding such candour was laid down more than two hundred years ago though not without protest, by La Fontaine in his *Comte de Belphégor*.

“ Filles de sang royal ne se déclarent guères ;
Tout se passe en leur cœur, ce qui les fâche bien,
Car elles sont de chair ainsi que les bergères.”

Marguérite took great pleasure in Mar society ; she had to seek in the fecundity of mind the means to tell him of her friends and as princes at that period could afford a sw condescension towards their inferiors, without risk of compromising their dignity, she allowed the poet to treat and address her as a sister.*

Whatsoever tender relations may have been hidden beneath this title, a time came when the poet was no longer satisfied with it, and solicited the favour of calling Marguérite his mistress. Though we must specially guard ourselves from construing this word according to the modern and perverted sense, there is no doubt that



may have been, that for Marguérite was real while it lasted, for it flattered all his senses at once, his vanity, his ambition, and manhood ; it stamped his genius as something beyond the common, for to that genius he owed the preference ; and, above all, the object of his love being superior to him in worldly station, his imagination invested her with all the illusionary forms from the perception of which springs desire. Prosaic *gradgrindism* may, with Dr. Johnson, call this latter perception the result of ignorance, but this ignorance is the basis of everything that exists, as well as of the worship of everything that is or appears above us. To know this ignorance would be destroying existence itself, argues Max Müller, an authority whom we would trust rather than Dr. Johnson or Gradgrind.* Nowhere is that perception so vivid as in the passion of a man for a woman superior to him in social status. Look how pleased M. Jourdain is when a noblewoman is introduced at his table.† How delighted Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse at the prospect of marrying Kate Aubrey.‡ Biren, the son of a goldsmith, becoming the lover of the Duchess of Courland is the type of a happiness which only women

* We will refer to this again in our essay on Swift.

† *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.

‡ *Ten Thousand a Year*, by Samuel Warren.

one must be the
of the *élite*. We
above our fellows.
pour un bourgeois,
the court of Louis
when surprise w
citizen offering n
poor noblewoman.
true.

To return to M
in his Fifteenth El
beautiful thoughts;
breathes the assur
observations, knows
the favour he crav
Marguérite granted
she commanded him
lover needed no pub
vanity, however, for
for some days at lea
testify his joy at the



"Aucunefois* au feu je la boutoye
Pour la brusler; puis soudain l'en ostoye;
Puis la remis, et puis l'en recullay,
Mais à la fin, à regret la bruslay.

* * * *

Mais si de vous j'ai encor quelque lettre
Pour la brusler ne la faudra que mettre
Près de mon cœur;"

Once acknowledged the lover, Marot felt that he might venture to ask for a consummation of his bliss. Time and experience had taught him different tactics than those formerly employed. He no longer asks, he merely intimates that he would be glad to receive.

"Quand je vois ma maîtresse,
Le clair soleil me luict,
S'ailleurs mon œil s'adresse,
Ce m'est obscure nuict.
Et croý que sans chandelle
A son liet à minuict
Je verrois avec elle."

Lovers are proverbially imprudent, and these two were no exception to the rule. People around began to talk, Marguérite took the alarm and became ill in consequence; her lover, with his poet's vanity, thought the sending of sonnets sufficient to cure her. The illness was slight, however, and it having put a stop to the scandalmongering, convalescence was heralded as a means to renew the intimacy with tenfold

* Maintefois.

out in the mean
absence. At his
to her husband's
the Queen no do
but into the part
enter more fully
chronicle such a k
one should be a
neither. We hav
origin, the reader
it waxed more ferv
mination and sub
would be little ben
through these succ
omission we may
Resartus. "We vi
lively pleasure the
from the ground,
the liquid deeps, ti
star; but what is tl
once by a natural
it has and it is



carrying the poet with it by a natural parabolic track, then dropped him by a natural perpendicular one to his mother earth, and even lower still. Love does not take half the trouble with the hapless wight that falls into his clutches that Hercules took to kill Antheus, but simply throws him down from the heaven he has built for himself. That is sufficient to undo him. That is what it did with Marot. One morning he was told by his royal mistress that they must meet no more. Let us drop the veil on the expostulations, entreaties, reproaches, offended pride, the simulated cool farewell; the knowledge of them is useless to our purpose. We have sufficient evidence to prove incontrovertibly the most important fact, namely, the passion of the poet, and the absolute sway in which it held him for the time being. What did he gain? what did he lose by this empire? He gained his genius as a poet, he lost the repose, the peacefulness of his life. In this respect he has often been compared with Petrarch. Nothing could be more untrue. Petrarch fell in love because he was a poet. Marot became a poet because he fell in love. If we take the trouble to read the first sonnets of the Italian, written before he saw, or heard of, Laura, we shall find in them that fond search after the poetic ideal, which takes a tangible shape in the Countess de Sades, because he met

majority of lad
woman than I
imaginary tribu
On the other ha
the Duchess d'A
pass muster as
what poetaster?
dantism, a poet b
in his birth to or
him; having no
become obsolete
moment he begin
sunshine of this
this decided and
rhetoric, uniting
grace with the at
Aspasia and Socra
all his natural
frank imagination
produce the real
that sunshine, his



phosis is due to Marguérite. To her he owes his talent, his glory, his renown, which for more than three hundred years have never been eclipsed for one single day ; but he also owes to her his tribulations, his torments, his misfortunes, his imprisonment, his exile.

“Love,” says Rochefoucauld, “is commonly succeeded by ambition, but ambition is hardly ever succeeded by love.” In this adventurous Court, enamoured of novelty and of forbidden fruit, hailing with predilection the most hazardous and bold opinions, then just appearing on the horizon of political and social life, let us imagine to ourselves this young provincial, of no birth, admitted by the sole privilege of his wit and brilliant mind to the dangerous honour of a haughty familiarity. What can he do to make himself welcome, to win his spurs? Even if he had the means, it would be difficult to surpass in energy and luxury these elegant cynics among whom he lives. And besides, he is in love, and with a woman who has condescended to single him out from among all these brilliant and witty nobles. Must he not justify her choice by something daring—something that shall make people talk of him? Politics are out of the question, so is the career of arms ; but religion is left, and the moment is auspicious for becoming distinguished, for there has lately crept into the world

fa
ag
bu
aft
eve
sur
sky
am
crim
door
one
Clém
He t
surely
he ad
at lib
to the
set at
should
but, al
serious.



the King, and put a sudden stop to his tolerant smile. While the "novelty-mongers" had confined themselves to speak of the abuses of the clergy—nay, even to mutilate some statues of saints—Francis had treated them as young madcaps, of whom it was best to take no notice, or to deal with leniently. But when they proceeded to placard in one night all the walls of the capital, down to the very entry of the Palais de Justice, the doors of the Louvre, and his own apartments with the most insolent threats against himself and his power, it could no longer be regarded as reformation; it was rebellion, and became a hanging matter. An abrupt change in the judiciary direction of Protestant affairs was the result; there was a solemn procession in mid-winter, followed by the King and his Court bareheaded, and the former took an oath to cut off his own arm, to immolate his own son, if he thought them infected by heresy; a decree of accusation was published against seventy-three suspected persons, among whose names figured, in large characters, that of his dear and well-beloved *valet de chambre* in ordinary, Clément Marot.

The poet was absent and on his way to the capital. He had stopped at Blois for a few days, "with no other intention," he says, "than to pay my court to the ladies, when a messenger

brought the news of what was going on in France. Prudently he faced about and made straight for Pau. Not deeming himself safe even there, he passed the Alps as best he could, for it was winter, and never slackened rein until he reached himself at Ferrara. He might at least be sure of an asylum with Renée, the second daughter of Louis XII., who had married the Duke of Ferrara. This princess was ugly, lame, pedantic and anti-Papist; she had a twofold reason for sheltering and protecting Marot, whose poetry had sung her marriage, and who was fleeing from Catholic persecution. He was welcomed by her as a new Ovid and another Calvin. For more than a twelvemonth the poet was the cynosure of a society of *précieuses* and female theologians, and this state of things would no doubt

phin, spoke of his affairs being neglected, the wish of seeing his family once more, adding "that he was entirely changed, spoke but soberly, weighing each word an hour before he uttered it, and answering by means of his head alone." The King was informed of the epistle, and his smile reappeared; the moment was well chosen; severity and prosecution had seemingly had their day; Rome herself counselled leniency. Marot was listened to; he had a safe conduct, and towards the end of 1536, after two years' absence, he recrossed the frontier, stayed for some time at Lyons, then came back to his real fatherland, the Court; but under what conditions and in which circumstances?

First of all, to all appearance he had abjured; for none of his fellow exiles having been allowed to re-enter France except by renouncing their heresy, it is unlikely that he should have been left to evade the common law. Some of his verses vaguely hint at an annoyance of this kind. And this was not his only cause for grief; everything had changed so much for the worse—from the poet's point of view at least—in these two years. Queen Marguérite was so staid, so sober and prudent, for everybody was watching everybody else. No more joyous games and romps, and infidel contests of wit. And his place at court had been filled; he no longer reigned

together t
When the
tortoises p
Marot unde
wind, and
celebrate his
which howev
of rare merit,
was a poetical
saw again af
those whose ex
to fear. This
It proved, as
position, and l
advantage of
on energetically
his friends seen
the King lean
his dear and
the old affectio



forsaken him when the love-passion took flight. Besides, he had to hide his natural inclinations, to extinguish his joyous and spontaneous wit, his airy insolence, and to don instead a staid and sober form, to preach peace and concord. The result was to be foreseen. Once embarked down that incline, all the faults of his youth came back—he became as his father had been, *gran rhétoricqueur*; his phrasing lost its gay and piquant turn—it became heavy and verbose, drowning for ever the terseness, precision, and gracefulness of yore. Marot was a true *enfant sans souci*; banter was his muse; gravity came as a mask and made him grin, not laugh. At every important event he deemed himself obliged, as in former days, to contribute his epistle; but it was cold and measured. He was no longer inspired; and if the divine *afflatus* now and then came, he felt himself compelled to throw his productions into the flame, for fear of giving rise to suspicions, which would not have been ill-founded, for he had not broken off his secret intelligence with his old comrades the reformers, who assuredly had no cause to laugh. Thus, as may be seen, gravity invaded him on all sides, routing his natural wit, which was of the most opposite stamp. He did not leave off rhyming, however, and the idea came to him, no doubt at the instigation of some Lutheran friends and pas-

beca
son
All
two
have
ment.
A Bo
possib
as it
the en
out req
comes
—*insuf*
pass-bo
It is ce
affluenc
How
authors
pleased
the su
not



wished Marot to offer him the thirty psalms, then translated; and the latter, though a Catholic prince, far from refusing the honour, rewarded them with two hundred golden doubloons.

Unfortunately the Sorbonne interfered. This university had been much exercised on account of the songs. Every attempt at interpreting in profane or vulgar tongue of a fragment of the sacred writings naturally aroused its suspicion, and the reputation of the translator, his former works and exploits, were scarcely calculated to allay its fears. It petitioned the King to leave to the Calvinists these kind of frivolous pastimes. Francis took the rebuff, and made not the least attempt to support what he had encouraged. This desertion frightened the poet, the ground seemed unsafe under his feet, he took flight, and without much ado sought shelter at Geneva; but there a still greater disappointment awaited him. The saints of this new Jerusalem had formerly conciliated and courted him, for they counted upon his influence—notwithstanding his temporary disgrace—to open the way to the King's favour for them. But when coming as an abandoned fugitive, they saw in him nothing but a compromising ally—a libertine, wavering in his beliefs, eaten up with worldly vanities. They compelled him to leave the town, and poor Clément had no other resource

than to fly into Piedmont, where the armies of the King were waging war. He sheltered himself behind the French halberds, under the protecting wing of the Marshal de Boutières, who it is said, had received instructions not to leave him to his fate. A few months later, at the occasion of the victory of Cerisola, and the glory of the Duke d'Enghien, he recovered to a certain extent the *verve* of his former years. It was the song of the swan. He had just time to learn that his verses had made a certain noise in France, and that the Court was speaking again of Marot, when he passed away at the age of forty-seven, in the year 1544.

This much for his strange and chequered life.



agreeable nothings, which it is the essential province of love to say, and in which art none excel so much as the French. To conclude, we cannot resist the temptation of giving two specimens of his art; the first is to his royal mistress, whom he addresses under the name of Anne—

“DE CUPIDO ET DE ANNE.

“Amour trouva celle qui m'est amère,
Et j'y estois, j'en sçay bien mieulx le compte;
'Bon jour,' dit-il, 'bon jour, Vénus, ma mère,'
Puis tout-à-coup il veoit qu'il se mescompte,
Dont la couleur au visage luy monte
D'avoir failly; honteux Dieu scait combien.
'Non, non, amour,' ce dis-je, 'n'ayez honte,
Plus cler voyans que vous s'y trompent bien.'”

The second is an epigrammatic rendering of our English familiar saying, “Never say die”—

“A UN JEUNE ECOLIER MALADE.

“Charles, mon fils, prenez courage,
Le beau temps vient après l'orage,
Après maladie santé;
Dieu a trop bien en vous planté
Pour perdre ainsi son labourage.’”

And woman did it all. Truly Molière was right when he exclaimed—*Les Femmes! Dans le monde on fait tout pour ces animaux-là.* It is because *La femme, c'est le cœur de l'homme.*



210

TINSLEY BROTHERS' NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Ghosts of the London Midnight, Saturday Night at the Cat, the London Rough, a Shady Industry, the Vampire Bride, Gool Birds at Large, a Night with Thieves, &c.

Now ready, in 1 vol. 8vo, with numerous Illustrations, price 12s.

Wonderful London: its Lights and Shadows of Humour and Sadness.

Now ready, in 1 vol., 8vo, with numerous Illustrations and Maps, price 21s.

Perak and the Malays: "Sārong" and "Kris."

By Major FRED. MCNAIR (late Royal Artillery), Colonial Engineer and Surveyor-General, Straits Settlements.

"The ancient history of the Malays, their trade, their wars, their system of government, and domestic life, are all fully treated of in this very interesting and entertaining book; indeed, we cannot think of any point concerning which his readers might wish to be informed that has been overlooked by Major MCNAIR."—*Spectator*.

"A useful and succinct account of a settlement which is increasing in importance, written by a gentleman who, in addition to the official opportunities of observation which he has enjoyed, has a naturally discriminating eye and an agreeable pen."—*World*.

"His almost exhaustive information is original and genuinely interesting."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

Pea Woffington, Maria Edgeworth, Lady Morgan, Countess of Blessington, Mrs. Hemans, Mrs. Jordan, Susanna Centlivre, Kitty Clive, Lady Stirling-Maxwell, &c.

Illustrious Irishwomen: being Memoirs of some of the most noted Irishwomen from the Earliest Ages to the Present Century. By E. OWENS BLACKBURNE, Author of "A Woman Scorned,"

"The Way Women Love," &c. 2 vols. 8vo, 28s.

"Such a list of names! such memories evoked! The history of these, related in the kindly unaffected manner that marks these volumes, should alone make the success of any book."—*Athenaeum*.

"This is a most interesting book."—*Morning Post*.

"An entertaining and valuable book."—*Vanity Fair*.

"A rich and varied gallery of portraits of highly-gifted ladies of Celtic blood."—*Daily News*.

Constantinople to Poti, Poti to Tiflis, Tiflis to Baku, &c.

A Ride through Islam: being a Journey through

Persia and Afghanistan to India *via* Meshed, Herat, and Kandahar.

By HIPPIELEY CUNLIFFE MARSH, Captain 18th Bengal Cavalry, F.R.G.S. 1 vol. 8vo, 14s.

"He deserves equal credit with Captain Burnaby for pluck and resolution; indeed he deliberately faced a more terrible risk than any that was run by the other traveller."—*Blackwood*.

"The book is exceedingly pleasant reading."—*Daily Telegraph*.

"We accept with satisfaction his sketches of Turkish life, from which much information may be drawn."—*Pictorial World*.

"This is an honest straightforward story of a journey made by Captain Marsh from Constantinople to Dadar . . . They also give us a favourable impression of Captain Marsh's perseverance and power of observation; the latter quality being especially manifested in his final chapter, in which he treats of the Russian advance in the direction of Afghanistan and the frontier policy that England ought to pursue."—*World*.

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 8, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

Handsom

*Wondrous Stories of Magic
Sorcerers, Visions, J*

The Lives of the

"No work upon conjuring th
—*Era*.

"He deserves the credit of
Gazette.

Barnum, the Pri

The Life and Adv

One of the Fraternity.

"The author has added many a

Clowns, Riders, Acroba

Hi

Circus Life and C

FROST.

"A more interesti...g and amus
Times.

"We must take leave of an intere
fortunate in its historian."—*Acaden*

Origin of Fairs, The

A Fe

The Old Showmen,

By THOMAS FROST.

"We have to thank him for a most
mation."—*Era*.

"One of the most amusing books of

Dr. Johnson, Boswell, and





